



告急！ 重生之后的 奶奶仙是子控！

第一人称叙述，第二人称叙述，第三人称叙述。小说中叙述者是“我”，叙述的是“我”的经历和感受，叙述者就是“我”。

Oh no! After I Reincarnated, My Moms Became Son-cons!

vol.6 - Epic of the Hero King: The Two
Brilliant Beauties

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Novel Updates

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Ch. 00 (Prologue)

After many things happened, things around me finally settled down. Winter finally came as it was scheduled to. I also changed into my thick winter clothing and returned to humanity's royal capital. Vyvyan left with Lucia when we left the palace. As for our wedding date, we were told we would be notified at another time so I didn't rush them. Since I don't have to travel between the two places, I can freely go on intimate strolls with Nier in humanity's empire and then return to the palace and attend to the jobs I need to attend to. Nier also finally started becoming strongly curious of various things like a girl. However, based on the indifferent attitude she had for merchants and others, it looks as though her innate nature hasn't changed. She just happens to treat me as a special case.

The orphanage was pretty much the same as always, except that the living quarters of the children had been renovated with the money. They also brought more people on board to help look after the children as well as teachers. Nier really likes that place and she even proudly announced she was now the princess. The dean and everyone at the orphanage gave their blessings, while I continued to watch Nier play with the children from above.

I wonder how much longer it'll be. Maybe Nier is already pregnant with our child.

"You are here, your majesty."

Just as Nier and I entered the palace, Castell walked in and bowed to us. I nodded and asked: "I've been back for some time now. I haven't seen you for a while, Castell. Where did you go?"

Castell stood back up, blinked his sly eyes a few times and replied: "Your majesty, I went to the border of the elves and humanity to check up on the progress of the building there. My, elven magic truly is miraculous. Our heavy machines look silly and powerless before their magic."

"Don't worry about it. I believe that our heavy machinery will one day be able to do what magic does."

I was full of confidence since I've seen the day humanity's science made huge leaps. Castell nodded with a smile and then said: "I shall consider your words good luck then, your majesty. Ah, I also heard about your marriage with Miss Gillante. Congratulations to both of you. Congratulations on finding your loved one, your majesty, and congratulations to you Miss Gillante for becoming the princess from today."

"Thank you, Castell."

Nier said that with her expressionless look. She interacts with Castell with a poker face and is much colder to others. Castell straightened up his torso again and said: "Your majesty, when do you intend to hold your wedding? Will it be in winter or do you want to wait until spring? Ah..... I would think winter."

"Why do you say so? Are you in charge of my wedding perchance?"

"Or would you have another candidate, your majesty?"

I choked on my words. I do actually have a better candidate, and that's Freya. I trust Freya more than Castell now because Castell is the empress's advisor, while Freya is my sister. I trust Freya more than an outsider, and I trust that Freya can smoothly organise a wedding with her intelligence.

But I do want to give Freya a chance to rest since she has always been by my side recently whether it was for the church's matters or the menial matters that we had to sort out afterwards. Freya who had been by my side coming up with ideas and strategies was tired and so I want to let her rest a bit more.

"I don't have any opinion. I just want to know where my wedding is going to be held."

"Oh, have I not told you?"

Castell paused. He then smiled and continued, "Did I not say that I went to go and take a look at the building at the border? That is a newly constructed city. I think you will be holding your wedding there. My, my, I have seen cities rise because of business and due to war, but this is my first time seeing a city constructed for a wedding. I think that the city must be a domain that her majesty is giving you."

I froze up. I know about ancient Europe granting a prince territory but I've

never had a domain of my own. But it makes sense as to why I don't have my own domain since I have to travel between the two nations. However, I don't know what I should do if mom suddenly grants me a piece of land.

I'm guessing the city is being built after my moms reached an agreement. Forget a city, I've never even been a captain in practice. How am I going to manage a city?

I need the almighty Freya.....

"My, you've met each other, huh? How coincidental. Oh right, your majesty, her majesty asked you to come to the inner court. She said there is something very important she wants speak to you about."

Just as we were talking, a small silhouette appeared before us. The loli Alice fanned herself and walked over with a smile. Nier froze up when she saw her, but then quickly bowed her head and saluted her loudly: "Captain!"

"Ah... don't, don't, don't. Don't do this. I can't accept it. I can't accept it!" Alice was so frightened she nearly tossed her fan. She smiled hopelessly and said, "Nier, you should have gotten used to your identity now, right? You are now a princess, and will soon take the Rosvenor surname, so it should be me that salutes you now."

"I dare not. I am a Valkyrie."

"Of course you aren't a Valkyrie. You are the princess." Alice cut her off and then turned to face me and say: "Your majesty, I must congratulate you. No matter if it is appearances or culinary skills, Nier is the best among the Valkyries. Of course, she is also a dutiful guard."

"Nier, you can cook?!"

I dawdled for a moment before looking at Nier. I honestly never thought Nier could cook. Nier shouldn't be able to do anything except be a Valkyrie who hacks people! Why does Nier know how to cook?! Nier nodded and then coyly replied: "I can, but my dishes are crude....."

"I want to try them!"

I looked at Nier with excitement. Nier was startled at first, but then revealed a

blissful smile and said: “Alright, your majesty. Once you return to the outer court, I shall personally cook for you as long as you don’t think poorly of my cooking.....”

“Of course I won’t! I’m eager to try it! I’m going to go and see m(om)-... ah, her majesty now.”

Nier and I split up. I went with Alice to the inner court.

“Ah, son, you’re here.”

When I entered mom’s room, I found her looking at a building blueprint. She revealed a joyful smile when she saw me enter. She pulled me over to the table and said: “Come, come, come. Son, take a look. This is the blueprint of the city we’ve prepared for you. See if there’s anything you’d like to add. Mommy thinks that it’s better to build you a city than a castle. This city sits on the border of humanity and the elven lands. It’s a very rich place. Mommy intends to make it your domain so that you and your wives can live there. Mommy can go and visit you. That way, you won’t have to travel all over the place.”

Mommy spoke cheerfully while I looked at the blueprint. It was a very normal city. The site chosen to build the city on was very good. It was a plain with a river and a mine nearby. It also connected to the elven forests.

“Mom... I don’t know how to manage a city.....”

“That’s alright. Mommy didn’t know how to initially either, but isn’t mommy managing this massive empire now? You don’t have to worry son. If there’s any major matter, mommy will stand up for you. You just need to enjoy life freely there. Mommy won’t interfere with your life. However, you mustn’t go to the elven lands. Mommy and Vyvyan discussed it already. You mustn’t go due to your condition. Just focus on the city.”

“My condition?”

“To put it simply, your body cannot come into contact with mana.” Mom pulled me into her arms and affectionately stroked my head as she continued, “In any case, this city is my wedding gift to you. Mommy wants to test you too... as a ruler. I want to see if you have what it takes to run a nation... Son, don’t disappoint mommy.....”

Ch. 01

Mom gave me a whole pile of things. To be frank, my mind is a mess right now. I haven't got the slightest clue as to what I should do. I just took what mom gave me back to my outer court completely stupefied and sat at the dinner table. Nier had finished making dinner. I was the only one at the long dining table, but there were lots of dishes. It looks like Nier cooked everything she could to show off her skills. It goes without saying that I won't make her cook even if she can. The royal family would look bad if she had to cook herself when she's the princess. Of course, if her cooking is good, I'll ask her to make a sumptuous meal every now and then. I honestly can't praise the food here in humanity's empire. I can only say that they're good enough for me to survive off. I can only truly enjoy delicacies when Vyvyan is with me.

Nier stood behind me somewhat nervous. I could see that she was very nervous though. I looked at the dishes on the table. There was a steak. The quality didn't look bad. It was smothered with soy sauce. There was a small jar on the side. As soon as I opened it, a strong fragrance scattered throughout the room. The meat stew inside was shimmering. On the plate to the other side was a fish fillet. It wasn't raw though. It looked smoked. On the small shelf to the left were a few grilled meat skewers. What looked like prawns floated in the bowl of soup to the side of the meat skewers. Its fragrant scent filled the room.

These great looking dishes with alluring smells makes me want to dig in.

I swallowed my first bite.....

After that, I came to a conclusive decision. And that was, if possible, I want Nier to cook for me for the rest of my life.

"You called for me, onii-sama?"

Half-an-hour later, Freya came to the dining hall and then paused for a moment when she saw Nier standing to the side with her hands on her blissful cheeks, looking like she was going to smile like an idiot. I nodded and replied: "Uhm. Freya, maybe this is very sudden, but I want to ask you a question. Do you know how to manage a city?"

“Manage a city?!” Freya was startled. She then smiled helplessly and said, “Onii-sama, I am not almighty..... My father was a military officer..... I have no experience managing a city... erm... but if you insist, then I can give it a try..... But where are we going to get a city from? Onii-sama, could you have obtained a domain?”

“Erm... you can say that. Mom gave me a city as a wedding gift, and it looks like I’ll be living in that city in the future..... Mom wants to see my management skills.....”

I scratched my head and smiled helplessly. I honestly think that Freya is very smart, but that doesn’t necessarily mean she has management skills. But I think Freya will probably quickly find a way to manage a city given how smart she is. Worst case scenario, we’ll manage it together!

“You should personally manage it, shouldn’t you.....? That said, knowing how to use people is the most fundamental skill a king should have. I may have never managed a city before, but I can try.” Freya looked at me and made a small bow. She then looked up with a smile and continued, “How can I say ‘no’ when onii-sama trusts me so much? I will find a way to manage the city properly no matter what. But, onii-sama, you need to help me out too.”

“I know.” The table had been tidied up. I spread the map of the city out on the table and Freya leaned over to take a look. She said: “It is a very large city. As a matter of fact, it should be considered a large city. Onii-sama, what plans do you have for the city? A city’s most important departments are the administration department, residential districts, business districts, factories and the entertainment district.”

“Since when did the entertainment district become one of the most important districts.....? To be frank, planning a city isn’t my forte.....”

I looked at the map of the city and smiled helplessly. Modern-day cities are much more reasonably planned and good-looking than this. At least I wouldn’t construct a factory right in the centre of the city. Further, these out-dated production methods in the workshops are definitely inappropriate. Assembly line productions are what we need now, and it happens to be next to a lake too, so using water-power is convenient. Let’s build the factories at the lake that’s

closest to the city walls then. And it definitely needs to be where there's downwind!

I don't think I need to manage any industrial waste emissions, do I? I don't think sewage water is as bad as it is in the modern-day or produces as much toxic waste liquids. Whatever. If something happens, we might even be able to swim with elven magic. Worse comes to worse, we'll just make it bone-dry.

The residential districts should be reasonably spread out around the city. The area closest to the city walls will definitely be for commoners while the centre's highest point would be the centre for administration as well as the residence district of nobles.

I then need to prepare a weaponry warehouse in the city. We need to have ammunition to fight off invaders there.

Next is the business district. I'll combine the residential areas with the business district then spread out small stores all the way to the vicinity of the people's residential area, and then place the large stores at the intersection of the streets.

Next are the public bathhouses and wells. Of course, I hate the people in the red-light districts, but Freya insisted on adding those districts.

Freya bluntly said: "Hot water, delicacies and women. A city wouldn't be stable without these three."

Seeing how she was so confident, I made room for those sorts of places. I believe that merchants are very clever. If there are such places there then there will be different sorts of stores around it.

"That should be about it. Of course, this is only a prediction for now. As for the details, we will have to see what we have to work with."

Freya massaged her temple, sighed and continued, "It certainly is a bit difficult. We only made predictions and yet it was so hard. Onii-sama, I think we will be busy next month."

I guess that's basically it. We both sighed and sat down. Nier walked up and gently draped my cape over my shoulders. She then whispered in my ear: "Dear, it's getting late. Let us head to bed so that we can work tomorrow."

Nier grabbed my left hand and placed it somewhere. My hand got covered with a warm and wet liquid. I turned my head around to look at Nier's face which was now rosy as she panted softly..... I felt a chill run up my spine, and had an ominous feeling that I was about to be drowned in endless misery and despair.....

You're not letting me rest at all! I am starting to suspect that it's not the drug's effect! You're fine during the day, so why do you always become like this at night?! You're definitely doing this on purpose! It's definitely on purpose!!

"I shall not disturb your rest then, onii-sama. Goodnight, onii-sama."

Freya knew what to do. She bowed and prepared to leave. When she got to the door, she suddenly turned around to look at me and ask in a serious tone: "Onii-sama, I suddenly thought of a problem. Onii-sama, we thought of an ammunition warehouse, as well as the arrangements of the height of the city-walls. But what about our troops?"

I thought about it for a second and then replied with puzzlement: "Troops..... The human and elf armies?"

Freya looked at me with a serious expression and in a serious tone explained: "No. Onii-sama, they are her majesty and her highness's army, not yours. As the master of a domain, why do you not have your own army? Onii-sama, we need to think about our army before the city is constructed. You will only have the right to speak if you have an army."

Ch. 02

I'm actually quite fearful of getting involved with a military. While I'm aware that having military power also means having political power, the problem lies in empowering one with military power the right to speak.

I grew up at my Moms' side, and my city was given to me by them. Will my moms feel a little threatened if I have the right to speak? Not to mention, the army I intend to build consists of humans and elves...

On the elven side, I've always considered making a unit that rode Earth Dragons. If I could create such a unit, my vanguard would virtually be unstoppable. I've witnessed the destructive potential of Earth Dragons charging at the enemy before. If I were to give them armour which could guard against piercing attacks, then they could run wild in the enemy camp and stomp them.

As for humanity, they still use a linear formation even though they have guns. The most powerful types of soldiers in this era are artillerymen. Napoleon started as an artilleryman. Cannons are the most effective weapon against enemies utilising a linear formation.

However, we're in a different era right now and a different world. Not only are there humans in this world, there are also elves. I'm not sure if there are other races out there. If I utilise humans versus humans methods here, I'll easily get caught in a passive position since cannons aren't much of a threat to races which split their forces up to do battle. Plus, cannons are easily disabled.

Consequently, I need a highly mobile unit. While infantry are the mainstream choice, I need a unit that can attack, which means I need cavalrymen. Now, if I were to fuse human cavalrymen with guns, then they would be the very common but have the infamous chunnibyou title, Dragoon.

Of course, they're not just infantrymen on horses.

Dragons exist in this world, a fact I know since my father died trying to slay the dragons up north...

Actually, we don't know if he actually died or not. He might just have fallen in love with a dragon mistress up there. But if my moms were to find out that was true, they'd raise an army to go and destroy the two of them... but back on topic. It looks like the dragons in this world are scary and rare. Since the Earth Dragons are low-end creatures, they can't be called proper "dragons."

I guess I'll be forming a human cavalry unit out of cavalrymen with guns, then. However, I won't be using the current weapons of this era.

Single-shot rifles just won't work with cavalrymen riding Earth Dragons, because they're not troops that would ride their steeds to their location and then dismount. What I want is a powerful, elite unit like the Guan Ning Cavalry. Therefore, I need to give the riders the best weapon I can think of.

The Spencer M 1865. Ah, you don't really need to know the specifics of the gun. You just need to know that it can fire consecutive shots and that the Dragoons accomplished a lot with it during the American Civil War.

I remember it very well because it was the first rifle that could fire consecutive shots. However, it needs its own specific ammunition, a type of metal bullet I've always wanted to make. I just didn't make them previously because I considered it to be a pain. My handgun doesn't require metal bullets either.

But I can now start manufacturing them.

And so, I went back to the red-haired lady's shop...

"You humans' winters could really kill me..."

She had returned, except she wrapped herself in a tight blanket and drank a distilled beverage facing the fire.

I shook out my cape, looked at her and said, "Ah... it's alright... It's just that elves can't really handle it, I guess... Won't you be fine if you just return to the elves, then?"

"The elves don't welcome me. And I haven't been back in so long. If that girl Vyvyan found out I had returned, she would never let me come back here. I can't bear to part with these things. They're my blood, sweat and tears." The lady with red hair looked at the blueprints on the wall as she cherished them.

She had a drink, then narrowed her eyes to look at me and Nier before saying, “It looks like your relationship is different now. What happened between you two, while I went to the desert?”

Nier wrapped her arm around mine, looked at her and replied, “Umm... we’re going to get married, I guess.”

“How nice. Congratulations. Your father created a massive tragedy by falling in love with a human chick, and what do you know? You fell in love with a human, too.” She giggled and then lazily raised up her bottle and said, “I won’t be attending your wedding. I don’t have any right to attend the wedding of royalty, anyway. Do you have any other business?”

“Yes.”

I looked at her and sternly continued, “I just received a domain from Mom. I hope you can help me out by helping me manufacturing guns.”

“Oh, really? That’s great. But I dare not.”

She answered me simply with just eight words. I smiled helplessly and said, “Come on... didn’t you help my mother back then? It’s not too much to ask you to help me now is it...?”

“Back then I came here because the elven king ordered me to. But, are you ordering me as the elven prince, now, or the human prince? Unfortunately, I’m an elf here in humanity. I’m not willing to kiss up to either side.” She rolled her eyes and continued, “The weather is so cold and you want me, a poor elf, to work? You don’t have a conscience.”

I played my cards, “The workplace is the elven border... And if you accept it, we can try a repeated-firing rifle.”

“Repeated-firing rifle?”

The red-haired lady laughed and replied, “While that sounds interesting, why should I go somewhere so far? If we’re talking about repeated-firing rifles, I have some clues on my own already. Your Majesty, isn’t making these things just for fun to us? If it’s just for fun, I can make you one.”

“No. I don’t just want one or two, but hundreds and an entire factory.”

I looked at the red-haired lady and continued in a serious tone, “The manufacturing process I have in mind for the factory is but child’s play to me. If you can help me, I will give you an entire factory. Your current place restricts you from carrying out some of your ideas, doesn’t it? If you are willing to helping me, however, I shall give you the entire factory with all the required equipment ready. You can use the factory for your own research and experiments.”

“Factory?” She didn’t seem to know what sort of place it was.

I pointed to her workshop and said, “It could fit roughly an entire street of blacksmiths and could produce the same amount of guns as a street of blacksmiths could, in a single day. It has the latest production materials and production equipment, money, plans and tools. I can get you anything you want.”

She looked at me with puzzlement. I imagine she couldn’t imagine what it looked like. But a moment later, she then squinted a little and said, “Your Majesty, though I don’t know what a factory is, I’m willing to trust you for once. If you really have such a large place... I might be willing to stay there.”

“Thank you so much, then!”

“Good grief. I had to help that old geezer look after his two kids, then I had to help that elven king wipe his own ass, and now I need to work for his son. I’ve been destined to meet my doom at the hands of you Galadriels, this lifetime.”

She smiled helplessly and then took in a deep breath. She stretched her back out and then softly said in a voice with anticipation, “If the place you spoke of truly exists... I think... humans will be able to conquer the continent even without magic... Humanity’s technology... is just miraculous.”

Glossary

*Chuunibyou is a derogatory colloquial term in the Japanese language used to describe a person which manifests delusional behaviour, thinking that one has special powers that no other person has.

**I don’t know if Dragoon sounds Chuuni in English speaking culture, but in Chinese culture, the Chinese term for it does sound try-hard and Chuuni

***Before someone calls it out, dragons per Chinese, Vietnamese, Japanese and Korean culture are mythical flying creatures, that's why lots of their idioms that refer to flight reference dragons. But somebody isn't going to read and say something about dragons not strictly having to fly while completely ignoring this cultural difference

**** Guan Ning Cavalry was a cavalry unit formed in later years of the Ming Dynasty. It was ruled by famous military general Yuan Chonghuan (1584-1630). It was considered a formidable unit even though it was small relatively speaking.

Ch. 03

I took in a deep breath before knocking on the door. I honestly feel a little guilty coming to see mom this time because my goal might poke mom in the wrong way. Militaries are an extremely touchy topic. Freya was right. You only have a voice if you have military power. A military is the foundation of a nation. You basically have a nation's lifeline if you have control of its army, and this empire was almost completely destroyed because the empire's army was lax for too long. That part of history is the one tragic memory mom doesn't want to recall. That is why mom is very sensitive about the military.

"Come in, son."

I pushed the door open. Mom stood up from her desk and looked at me with a smile. After looking at me silently for a moment she said: "Son... you don't look too well... and... the smell on you... is Nier's scent, isn't it.....?"

I went red in the face..... I really don't want to talk about how Nier suddenly pulled me into a small room and forced another load out of me on the way here..... Man, I feel like I've become her bank. As long as Nier is feeling it, no matter where we are, we have to..... I can't win against her in a fight and she won't listen to me either. How am I supposed to recover if this continues....?

"It's not really mommy's place to interfere....." Mom blushed a little as well and then continued, "Since that is a perfectly normal for a married couple. But you need to have moderation. Too much of anything can be bad. Your condition isn't too good right now either, so you should rest more if you can....."

Say no more! Say no more! If you say anymore, you're going to lose your son! I could die from shame right now! Don't say anymore! You think I don't want to rest?! I want to have a peaceful sleep every night too! We agree to just hold each other and sleep for the night, and then the next thing I know is I wake up to find Nier riding on top of me while apologising! Aren't you telling that to the wrong person here?! Haven't you got this the wrong way around?!

That's why my nights are just chaotic. Absolutely chaotic. I only get a short nap in the nearly mornings when Nier tires out. But Nier doesn't seem to

require much sleep since she's a Valkyrie. Thus, Nier recovers in just a few hours while I'm exhausted like a zombie.....

I knew I shouldn't have agreed back then... but then Nier wouldn't have become my wife if I didn't..... Ah... this sucks no matter how I think about it..... I used to anticipate this sort of stuff when I was with Nier, but I get scared whenever I see Nier now.....

It's freaking scary..... Too freaking scary..... I didn't believe you could get wringed completely dry, but I damn do believe it now! You'll have mixed fortunes with a wife like this! Wait, no! The misery far exceeds the joy!

Mom looked at me while affectionately stroking my face and with a smile asked: "So, what have you come here for this time, son? Or did you want to sleep with mommy?"

I hesitated for a second and then almost cried from gratitude. Mom knows me best! I won't be harassed by Nier if I sleep with mom. I can finally rest tonight. Thank heavens. I'll be fine if I sleep with mom. I'm going to come and sleep with mom when I can't take it anymore in the future.

"Wonderful! Mommy shall make arrangements now. Sleep with mommy tonight, son."

Mom hugged me tightly with excitement. She kissed me a few times on my face loudly. She then let go of me and with a smile asked: "So what did you come for, son?"

I looked at mom and spoke my mind: "Erm, mom... I want... I want my own army."

I looked at mom's face nervously as I awaited her response.

Mom's expression changed several times, which I assume was because she was thinking. I don't think she's angry. I'm a little afraid. I don't know if mom will scold me. I can't do anything if mom allocates the Valkyries to me..... I can't go against mom's wishes and secretly raise an army and acquire weaponry either. I'll seriously be arrested for that.

"Mommy is thinking... mommy is thinking which unit would suit you best..... How about the first and second platoon? Those two platoons are situated

outside of the royal capital. They are mommy's most trusted elite platoons as well as the platoons with the best armaments and members. They were the platoons that followed mommy when mommy went on mommy's conquest. You can have them, son. Mommy shall write an order.....”

“Wait! Mom! Please stop for a second!!”

I looked at mom with complete astonishment. She started looking for her seal after she finished thinking about it. I was so shocked I quickly grabbed her arm. Mom didn't hesitate for a moment! She didn't hesitate at all! What she was thinking about was which group to give me, not how to reject me, not to mention she gave me her best platoons! Isn't mom worried I'd do something with those platoons?!

“What's wrong? Ah, did you want to form your own army? That's fine. Mommy shall call back the most elite platoons from the different locations, and you can choose to your heart's content!” Mom looked at me. She sounded like she was bragging when she said, “Mom is very strict about the armies formed, so whether it's the artillery squads, cavalry or infantry, they're all the elites among elites. You can form your own, that's fine! You can have as many men as you want. Mommy shall allocate them to you!”

“No, no. Aren't you worried, mom?!”

Mom paused for a moment and looked at me with a hint of excitement. She tilted her head and asked with puzzlement: “Why? What does mommy have to worry about?”

I looked at her and asked with hesitation: “Mom... are you not worried... I'll siege the capital with those soldiers?”

Mom shook her head, looked at me like it was a matter of course and replied: “If you want the throne, you just have to tell mommy. Mommy will pass it to you without any hesitation. What need is there for you to revolt? Mommy loves you. Mommy can give up anything for you. If taking mommy's head could put a smile to your face, mommy would give you mommy's own head without any hesitation.”

“Mom, your love is too burdensome! I would never make such a request!!”

"In that case, what is there for mommy to worry about then?"

Mom smiled and pulled me into her embrace. She said in a serious tone, "Mommy knows that you're kind and that you love mommy. That is what is most consoling for mommy. You are mommy's only son. At the end of the day, everything mommy has is yours. Even mommy is yours. So why would mommy not be willing to give you something? If you need something, you just need to say the word, be it money, food, power, status, people... or even mommy's life."

"Mom....."

I leaned into mom's embrace and sniffled. Mom truly loves me. She could give away an entire empire to love me. I guess that not even the entire empire could compare to a one smile from me. I sort of hate the previous Troy. Elizabeth loves him so dearly and yet he wasn't even willing to call her "mom".

"Mom... I think... I don't need a platoon worth of men. I just need a few hundred men. What I want isn't an army but my own guard-unit."

Mom nodded and replied: "Like the Valkyries, right? Mommy's Valkyries are all orphans. Mommy raised them, so they have very strong feelings for mommy. Son, your own guard-unit is a unit you yourself must make submit to you and worship you. Mommy can't allocate you such individuals because mommy's guard-unit will only follow mommy's orders. Son, you must go and search for your own warriors you make submit to you. Mommy shall provide you with arms and power."

"Uhm... thank you, mom... thank you, mom....."

I hugged mom around her waist tightly and sniffled. Mom nodded. She gently stroked my head and softly said: "Drink with mommy tonight then....."

Ch. 04

"Is that so? So you slept at her majesty's place last night, huh.....?"

Nier had her arms folded as she looked at me with extreme displeasure. It looks like she's very angry about me staying at her majesty's place last night. To be honest, I didn't actually sleep so well with mom. Mom was in a really good mood yesterday. She drank and spoke about her experience with managing the empire and finally got drunk. That's no big deal. If you're drunk, so be it. But her behaviour turned for the worst when she got drunk. She kept feeling me up with her hands, and she kept throwing herself at me, causing me to wake up in the middle of the night several times winded.

"Uhm... come on, Nier, you don't need to be angry....."

I smiled helplessly and tried to smooth it over with Nier. She's my bodyguard and yet she dares to give me looks of anger..... But I'm glad to see Nier show so many expressions now.

Nier gave me an annoyed "hmpf" and then stretched her hand out to complain: "Dear, did you not know how worried I was last night? I'm fine with you staying at her majesty's place, but you need to send someone back to notify me. I stood at the door holding a light waiting for you until dawn but you didn't come back....."

Nier wore an expression like she was a wronged cat. I felt bad so I reached my hand out to pull her into my embrace. She followed along and hugged me back..... Hugging Nier was completely different to hugging Luna which felt like a lovely and pliant little bird in my arms. Nier is about as tall as I am..... I stroked Nier's back and softly said: "Sorry. Sorry for making you worry, Nier. I will definitely notify you if I'm not coming back next time."

"I hope that there will never be a time where you can't come back....." Nier gently bit my ear and whispered vaguely in my ear, "Now... now... dear... dear... let's find somewhere... let's find somewhere... I can't hold it any longer... in your arms... I can't hold it any longer....."

Nier quivered gently in my arms like her legs under her dress almost couldn't

hold her up. I tightly hugged and shook Nier who was on the verge of crumbling. Nier's breathing became erratic. Her hands swam all over my body. She panted by my ear causing me to feel uncomfortably ticklish.

"Nier... hold it in for a while... hold it in for a while... it's daytime right now! It's daytime! We still have work to attend to! We still need to head out!"

No! No! If we do it once right now, my entire night's rest will go to waste. I need to head out during the day too. I need to head out to do something very important so I can't waste time here!"

"Go a bit later... go a bit later... dear... I can't hold it anymore... your scent... your scent... my legs shake as soon as I smell your scent... my dress... my dress is going to get wet... dear... dear... if... if we can't, let's just do it here then....."

It really looked like Nier couldn't resist it anymore. She started to have hot flushes on her face and her eyes started to look hazy. She even started licking my neck with her tongue. What the devil happened last night? Doesn't Nier know how to get off on her own when I'm not around?!

"We can't do it here! This is the inner court's corridor!! What are we going to do if her majesty catches us?! This is her majesty's resting place!!!"

We'd be executed, wouldn't we?! Doing this sort of stuff in the inner court must be a death sentence!

"Hurry... hurry and find a place then... hurry....."

Alice followed behind the empress. The empress's complexion looked a bit better than it was yesterday. It looks like her well-being improves significantly if she can sleep holding her son. Though Alice hates the prince, she didn't mind him visiting a few more times if it meant it could keep her majesty healthy.

It looked like the empress was very happy. She hummed the song they hummed back then in the army. From behind, Alice asked: "Your majesty, what plans do we have for today?"

The empress licked her lips and replied with anticipation: "Hmm... nothing. I want to go horse-riding. Bring a couple of horses to the riding-course. Gosh, spring hasn't arrived yet, but I really want to go hunting now."

Hunting was the empress's favourite activity in spring. With no war to wage right now, that was the only time she could ride around on her horse boldly without any concerns. And the nobles in their hunting gear riding behind her with the flags let the empress feel the comforting feeling of being on the battlefield again.

"As you command."

Alice nodded and then the two of them made a turn which is when they saw the two of them come out from the room. The empress was startled to see them, but then she smiled and said: "Ah, Nier, son."

"Ah, your majesty....."

Nier smiled as she made a small bow. She put her handkerchief she was wiping her mouth with back into her pocket. I smiled helplessly, made a small bow and greeted mom: "Good morning, mom."

The empress sniffed the air as if she could smell a strange smell. She looked at Nier and then looked at her rosy lips with suspicion. She noticed there were some traces of liquid on the corner of her lips... Nier gently licked her lips, then smiled and asked: "Do you have orders, your majesty?"

"Ah... no....."

The empress sighed to herself. She then revealed a helpless expression and said: "I'm looking forward to it. I wonder what your child with my son will be like. I really want to see my grandchild now. I really regret not being able to raise my son. I want to try experiencing what it's like being busy for a child as a mother."

"Your majesty, you need not worry. I will try harder."

Nier made a deep bow and then looked at me with a weird smile that sent chills up my spine. My forehead was going numb. I had so many things I want to say in my mind. Try hard at what? Try hard at bloody what, woman?! Please! Don't try harder at this sort of stuff! You're already trying very hard! You're already trying super hard! For real, you've completed the first prerequisite for getting pregnant. If you continue like this, I'm afraid Lucia will be infertile!!

Elves place heavy importance on the next generation! If Lucia can't become a

mother because of you, Nier, you're going to die! You really will have to square off against a vengeful Lucia who won't stop until she's dead!

"That's very good to hear. My son's safety is in your hands from now on. I hope that you won't let your skills rust after you become the princess."

Nier earnestly replied: "Please do not worry, I will not."

"Good. I want to see you fight next time, Nier. Bring my son along with you. Watching your swordplay is a form of enjoyment. Son, make it tonight. Yeah, make it tonight. Call men over to spar with Nier. Nier, how many can you beat right now?"

Nier smirked and then confidently stated: "That will depend on when his majesty wants me to stop then. Otherwise, it would be pointless to bring even more people."

The empress paused for a moment and then laughed out loud and said: "Good, good, good. Very good. Nier, I like your pride and confidence now. That's how my princess should be. Only like this can you educate my grandchild so that he becomes an excellent man no less than my son. Uhm, make it tonight then. Remember to come along son." The empress laughed as she left. It looks like she's really happy.

"Nier, will you be okay?"

I looked at Nier slightly concerned.

Nier smirked and then next to my ear said: "Your majesty... let's do it as many times as the number of people I take out... what do you think?"

"..... Kill me! Just kill me now!!"

Ch. 05

I looked at the bar in front of me. This place is full of memories. This was the place Nier princess-carried me for the first time, though I was basically suiciding. But it's still a very nice memory. It can be considered the first time we fought side-by-side. It might even be the place Nier fell in love with me. Uhm, that night where I drifted really was beautiful. I've got to do it again someday.

Wait, no, no. Drifting is dangerous.

I pushed the door to the bar open. It was as noisy as I remember it. I don't get it, you're soldiers, but you don't need to be at your camp?! Why do I always see you people?! Which camp do you belong to? I'm going to go and report you now!

When they heard the sound of the bell ring when the door opened, they turned around to look at me. I stood in place, looked at them silently and then asked: "What's wrong? Why are you looking at me like that?"

"Your majesty!!"

All of them suddenly raised their cups of wine up and shouted which gave me a fright. I nearly fell onto my ass. They laughed loudly and gulped their wine down. One of them then pushed a young man out in front of me. They laughed and said: "Hurry up and thank his majesty. You'd be dead right now if it wasn't for his majesty!"

I looked at the young man in front of me who was trembling. He looked about the same age as myself. He looked very delicate and pretty. He gave off the vibe of a female. If he were dressed as a girl and wore on some makeup, he really would look like an actual girl. He looked even more like a girl now with the way he was sobbing and trembling.

"Thank you... thank you... thank you... for saving me, your majesty... if it were not for you... I... I....."

"Don't cry! Don't cry! Speak properly!!"

His tears started running down his face before he could finish, making him

look even more like a girl now. Actually, he was gentler than a normal girl. The man behind him couldn't stand it so he pulled him over to his side and patted him hard on his back. He frowned and said: "What are you crying for? You're here to thank him not whinge to him..... Whatever. Forget it. Let me explain. He was originally a soldier, but he caught the church's eyes so they made him their plaything. If you did not assault the church's castle that day and rescue him, he might have died in there."

I recalled my method back then..... Yeah..... he sure is lucky to have survived. I levelled the area around the castle and caused half of the castle to collapse like a huge wave from the lake crashed into it several times. I nearly killed him, but fortunately, it looks like he was alright.

I smiled and replied: "Don't worry about it. I didn't know the church did that sort of stuff. You should've told me about it from the start."

"We did not know you were so insistent back then. We thought it would end with you submitting to the church's wishes. We never expected for you to destroy the entire church. All of the branches have suffered repercussions and they do not dare to do anything now. Even the priest in the army is living in constant fear!"

They laughed. It looks like people are happy to see the church be done with. Well, they're only so elated about it since they were the church's victims. Under normal circumstances, people should be neutral about it because it's got nothing to do with them. Their life after the church is gone would remain the same.

But they could take advantage of the chaos and smash the church since they've got nothing to do with it being winter. They could make themselves a quick buck too. They'd hit the jackpot if they could find some gold jewellery. Hmm, I need to deal with those opportunistic people. I need to pass down an order ordering all assets stolen from the church must be submitted to the royal family. It's not a bad idea to make some spare change.

"Therefore we need to thank you for this, your majesty. You certainly are different to those officials. We admire your determination and bravery. As we mentioned last time, we will go through hell for you if you need us. We will do

anything to repay you!"

The rest of them responded in support. From what mom said about finding people I got to submit to me, these are the people I think of. Sometimes, hatred is the best chain. People who all hate the same thing will be closely united and never betray each other. We hate the church while I destroyed the church. I think they've changed their opinion of me and are the most loyal to me.

I felt the timing was right. I looked at them, cleared my throat and said: "Good timing. I have something I'd like to ask you to help me with now."

They slowly quietened down. I looked at them and earnestly said, "Gentlemen, I will soon have my own domain. Her majesty has allowed me to form my own guard-unit. After much deliberation, I decided to choose you. I really admired your bravery and the discipline you displayed during our last team-up. If you are willing, I would like to ask you to write your name and information down on the sheet of paper and become my guards."

They all dawdled for a moment and exchanged glances with each other. A moment later, the young delicate and pretty looking guy wiped the tears by the corner of his eyes, looked at me and asked:

"L-Like the Valkyries?"

"Hmm... no, not like the Valkyries. I don't want that sort of guard-unit either. I don't want that sort of loyalty. I want guards who are happy to and willing to obey me. If you think that I am a prince worth your loyalty, then be my guards. You are not sacrificial warriors, but my guards, guards who shall protect my life, honour and future."

I looked at them and earnestly continued, "As long as you're willing to obey me and feel that I am a wise ruler, than come and guard me!"

"I'll join!"

As soon as I finished, the young man raised his hand up high. He puffed up his flat-chest and loudly remarked: "You saved me, your majesty. And you avenged me. When I came out, I swore that I would serve you, even if it meant being just a mere servant. I am so glad to know that I can become your guard! If you can accept me, please allow me to pledge my loyalty to you!"

"He's right! Your majesty! You are someone that is worthy of our loyalty! As long as you do not betray her majesty, we shall serve you!"

With that, the others felt encouraged and raised their arms up as they shouted. I watched them and nodded my head with gratitude and consolation. I then said: "Please write down your names and information on the sheet of paper. After some time, I shall come and find you to come with me to my domain. After that comes training. Your training won't be easy. As my guards, you must be superior to others!"

"Roger! We shall serve you with our swords, our lives and our souls!"

I think that this group of men are most trustworthy because our hatred is directed at the same target, plus, we've teamed-up in the past. Further, there is no need to question their loyalty as they are the descendants of veterans.

I was soon proven right. These men never left my side no matter what the danger we faced was. They never let shame or disgrace taint the bright golden brooch on their chest.....

Ch. 06

"Princess, please forgive me if I accidentally hurt you in battle."

Nier paid no attention to the guy opposite her speaking to her. She instead waved the wooden sword in her hand and complained: "This wooden sword is a bit too light... it doesn't feel right..... Why can't we use real swords like in the past...? Life or death is decided by one's blade after all... This can't be considered a duel....."

"It can... it can... this is a demonstration-type duel. Don't go killing him!"

I pat Nier on her shoulder and adjusted the leather armour at her chest. This is just a simple duel which serves as a performance for the empress and I to watch, but I have to admit that the empress looked so excited it might actually get to her head, and she might end up getting up there personally..... I also called the dozens of soldiers I recruited to come and see Nier's swordplay. Nier will be their sword instructor in the future. I can't have my cavalry only know how to shoot from their steed. They need to be able to stand against the Valkyries on foot as well.

Only soldiers competent in all fields are true soldiers. It's not like they'll always be able to ride next to me after all. The gun used on horseback is short by nature, so instead of equipping them with a bayonet, it would make more sense for them to be equipped with swords.

I'll also equip them with the curved elven-imperial-guard sabre Nier has. Those are very deadly weapons whether we're talking about its mechanics or materials. The only issue is that only elven imperial guards are allowed to wield them, so I need to get some from Mommy-Vyvyan for my guards.

"Your majesty, as per agreed, we shall do it as many times tonight as the number of people I take out."

"I think you should just kill me instead. Actually no, I should just kill myself... didn't you often suggest I do so in the past?"

Nier giggled softly and then hugged me. I hugged her back and softly said: "Go

easy on them... don't beat them to a pulp. They're nobles after all, so give them a way out that's not so embarrassing....."

I felt sorry for the guy opposite her. Under normal circumstances, I would be hugging my princess and gently saying: "Honey, be careful. Just surrender if you can't win. Don't get hurt." But instead, I was now gently telling Nier not to let her blood go to her head and go all out. Yes, it's a wooden sword, but a wooden sword can still cripple someone. Hit hard enough and you could kill!

"Don't worry, don't worry dear. I'm your princess now so I wouldn't be so violent. It'll be alright if I just knock his sword away, right? Uhm, okay."

Nier whipped her arm and continued with a smile, "I'm not really used to it, but I'll try my best to control myself. Your majesty, please watch my brilliant performance."

"Sure."

I nodded and walked down. I went over to sit next to the empress. The two of them bowed to each other and then raised their wooden swords up. Nier's movements were up to standard. However, I noticed clear traces of elven swordplay in the mix. It makes sense since the Valkyries were taught by her majesty. The empress was taught by the red-haired lady. The empress combined her experience with the sword on the battlefield as well as the strengths of both races' styles, and the result is the current Rosvenor sword style.

Of course, I don't know how to use it... Even though she holds the title of Sword Saint, she and Vyvyan surprisingly maintain the same stance that I am not to learn swordsmanship.

Next to me, the empress chuckled softly and suggested: "Son, let's have a bet. Let's bet how fast Nier can finish her opponent off." I hesitated for a moment. Her opponent was not some random noble. For him to be able to show-off his sword skills before the empress, he must be a skilled descendant of a family of swordsmen who have been around for centuries. I've only seen Nier instant-kill fodder. Her opponent this time wasn't weak. I don't know how Nier is going to put him away either.

"I think....."

"Alright, how about mommy provides a suggestion."

Mom looked at me and held up her cup of wine. She then giggled softly and asked: "You should be aware of how fast mommy drinks wine. Nier will have won before mommy can swallow it. Do you believe mommy?"

I paused and then shook my head. I replied: "That... that's pushing it a little, don't you think...? I don't know....."

"You need to have faith in your wife. Mm, you haven't seen Nier's sword skills yet. Or rather, you don't know how hard Nier trains. I presume Nier rarely draws her sword when she's with you. You will be able to see her true skills this time. Don't be shocked, son."

"I....."

The empress raised her cup of tea up and gently clinked it with mine. Our wine-cups here aren't big because the empress likes to drink the strong wine from the desert in winter. If she drank it with a red-wine cup, it'd be a little bit too much, so she uses small wine-cups. One drink, from the moment it enters her mouth 'til she swallows it is only around one second, right? If it's just one second, Nier wouldn't even get a chance to m.....

Bang!

Before I could even raise my cup, Nier had already moved. It was like seeing a shadow flash right before my eyes. The sound of Nier's cape whistling through the air was the only indicator of just how fast she moved. Nier ended the match in that one instant while her opponent looked at his right hand utterly stunned. A sword should've been there, yet he released his grip on it without even realising it because Nier struck his wrist in a split second.

"Beautiful."

Mom placed her cup down and winked at me with satisfaction. I was holding my cup of wine at my mouth completely stunned just like the guy up there who was at a lost for what to do. I turned my head around to look at the soldiers behind me. They too were looking at Nier whip her sword with their jaws on the ground and utter disbelief in their eyes.

"That's one, your majesty."

Nier smiled in my direction and extended a finger. I thought they would exchange blows so I could call it quits, saying we ran out of time after one or two opponents. But by the looks of things, I'm going to be completely emptied! If she beats one per drink, I might as well die now!

A chill started from my feet and ran all through my body. Nier's smile is now particularly terrifying to me. I felt like the next one to get up onto the ring and fight her was me... I stood up and walked up to Nier. I softly said to her: "Nier... didn't I tell you to go easy? It's not good for you to instantly put your opponents down like this! They're going to feel humiliated like this!"

Nier looked at me slightly unhappy and said: "I already held back... Look, I hit his wrist. Normally I would go straight for the heart..... Your majesty... you're not trying to stall for time and then go back on your word are you.....? I won't let you go to her majesty's place tonight~....."

"Hahahaha... whatever do you mean...? I wouldn't do that...? Would I be afraid of that sort of thing? Nier... have you seen me afraid before?! It's just... It's just....."

"I can continue fighting without worry then....."

Save me... I'm dead... I'm scared... I'm seriously scared... This is not a duel. This is wrapping a rope around my neck..... Can you guys do something? ... Please, someone please defeat Nier..... Surely there's one of you who can fight! Is this wannabe martial arts all you know?!

After she finished, Nier walked up to my side. I turned around to look at the soldiers behind me and asked: "She will be your instructor in the future, Nier Rosv... she will be soon..... What do you think? Do you have any opinions?"

The stood in place, saluted firmly and replied: "We shall follow your orders, instructor! We are sincerely convinced!"

"Great then. Your training won't be easy. You will be guarding my husband after all. If my husband gets hurt even with you around....." Nier wiped her smile away and then coldly said: "I'll be very angry... I will be... very, angry....."

I noticed them shudder.....

"Ah, Nier, Nier. Good timing. My hands have gotten eager seeing you enjoy it

so much."

Just as Nier was about to drag me to the guillotine, I mean, bed, the empress called out to Nier from behind. Mom picked up a wooden sword without putting on any armour, warmed up her neck and then said: "Come, come. Come and spar with me."

Nier looked at me and then looked at the empress. She nodded and replied: "Alright, your majesty. However, please go easy on me. I want to turn in early with his majesty....."

Mom! Hit her viciously!! Knock her out!! Knock her out!!

Ch. 07

How many days have I been separated from my son...? How many days has it been...? Day seven... Day seven, four hours, thirty-five minutes..... I can't... I can't... I can't take it anymore... My son isn't here by my side..... I should be able to see him now but he's on the other side. If it were a normal month, I would be able to hang in there, but the feeling of not having him by my side when he should be... I can't take it anymore.....

I can't... I can't survive... If I can't smell my son's scent again I'm going to lose control... I can't take this... I think I'm going to go and snatch him back and then push him down. if I don't recharge..... I can't. I can't. My son's wedding is coming up. I can't make a mistake during this time.....

"Lucia..... Lucia..... Lucia....."

"What is the matter?! Your highness!"

Lucia went up to Vyvyan's bed and saw her shivering with her eyes completely void of life. Vyvyan pulled Lucia into her embrace and opened her blood-red eyes like a hungry wolf that smelt the presence of food. She pulled her into her embrace aggressively and bit Lucia's neck before licking Lucia's skin desperately.

Lucia's entire body went numb like she got electrocuted, numbing her muscles and nerves wherever she got licked. The tip of Vyvyan's tongue skilfully danced around on her white neck and would suck on her neck aggressively every once in a while. Lucia's body started to turn powerless. She couldn't hold back her moans and her face started to turn red. Vyvyan sucked every spot she licked leaving behind a red lip-mark.

"Y-Your highness....."

Lucia's gaze started to look hazy. Vyvyan pushed her away. She then clasped her face like a lover and kissed Lucia on her lips. Her tongue went wild inside Lucia's mouth, swallowing all of her saliva. Lucia's tongue began to react and move without her control as she clumsily followed Vyvyan's movements. She couldn't stop herself from hugging Vyvyan. Vyvyan who was a higher-being among elves was naturally attractive to Lucia on an instinctive level. Lucia's

mind was completely blank. She came in when she heard the queen's shrieks, but never imagined this would happen.

Vyvyan retracted her tongue and then grabbed Lucia's hand. She stuck Lucia's fingers into her mouth one by one and sucked on them. Lucia's legs jerked themselves intensely. She then moaned and dropped to her knees on the ground. Her flushed look and hazy gaze exuded a lustful aura.

Elves don't usually get horny, but because of Vyvyan's magic and lust, Lucia's feelings became directed toward Vyvyan in front of her instead of her husband.

"Fuu... fuu... fuu... fuu....."

Vyvyan threw Lucia down and then panted. She buried her head in Lucia's breasts and took in big breaths, devouring the scent on the young girl's body like a tobacco addict catches the scent of tobacco. Lucia's scent was a fragrant smoke to Vyvyan right now.

"Ah... my son... my son... my son....."

Vyvyan clasped her own face, roared and shrieked in an unseemly way. She ran her hands all over her face leaving countless traces of blood.

"Y-Your highness... You... you....."

Lucia awakened from her stupor and looked at Vyvyan in front of her with terror. Vyvyan yanked her over with one arm and ripped open the section on her dress where her breasts were. She ripped her pendant off and tossed it into her mouth. A moment later, the savage look in Vyvyan's eyes slowly disappeared. She spat out a small bottle and then sat to one side as she panted.

The blood-red look in her eyes slowly reverted back to their usual calm and graceful blue. She froze in place and spaced out like a machine that ran out of batteries. The entire room went silent with only the two of them panting intensely as well as their scents mixed together in the air.

"Your highness... what... what... what... what....."

Vyvyan hugged Lucia who was completely flustered. She revealed an exhausted smile and said: "Don't worry, Lucia. I was just missing my son..... At present, the person who carries my son's scent most prominently is you so I

needed to suck out some of my son's scent on you to calm myself down..... I can't be without my son. If I don't see him, I'm going to go berserk. I don't want for that to happen before you get married. This is my only option since my son isn't here with me."

Lucia trembled as she stood up and looked at the carpet she made wet and blushed. She held her clothes Vyvyan tore together tightly and said: "Your highness... your highness... Are we not heading to that city tomorrow? You will get to see his highness soon....."

"So I need to hold it in for a while longer... I'm going to go and look for my son tomorrow... But Lucia, the scent on my son has faded a fair bit too. You haven't seen my son in a long time as well, right? That Nier is lucky. Lucia, you must get pregnant before Nier no matter what. You do have the advantage though since your chance of getting pregnant on a full-moon night is one-hundred percent. And it'll be hard for her to get pregnant since she's human while my son is an elf. As long as you manage to get pregnant, my son won't get too close to humanity for several months."

Vyvyan recovered her composure. She waved her hand and the torn bits of cloth on the ground returned to Lucia's body and her dress was repaired. Lucia struggled to get up. She then looked at Vyvyan as she asked: "I just have to get pregnant? I just have to be with his majesty on a full-moon night?"

"Uhm. However, my son's mana will be most potent on a full-moon night. I don't know if you'll be able to handle it..... I think I'm the only one that can stand it."

Vyvyan looked at Lucia, smiled and continued, "Just put up with the pain for a bit since this is a very important issue after all. You want to have a few kids with my son too, don't you?"

"Uhm!"

"Good."

Vyvyan stood up and said: "Don't worry, Lucia. You'll get to see my son tomorrow. You're not the only one who misses him. I miss him too. Cling to him after you see him. My son can't come back with his body's condition. It's tough on you too since you have to stay here with me even though you love him so

much."

Lucia looked a little excited now. She was going to get to see her loved one soon. Her excitement was like that of separated lovers who run to the train station to see each other. However, Lucia was slightly unhappy because she didn't know what Nier had done by his highness's side. She is so happy with his highness, and yet she has to hand him over at night.

But Lucia really looked down on Nier. From Lucia's perspective, Nier is just after physical pleasure which made her no different to an animal. Her feelings for his highness were truly pure love. She didn't love his body but his soul. Thus, Lucia didn't mind handing his highness over to Nier at night.

Her love for his highness was truly pure after all. But Nier was fine as long as her demented lust was satisfied. It was just like raising a dog, so what?

With that train of thought, Lucia considered life as it was to be quite good.

Of course, the happiest news yet was that she was going to get to see her beloved prince tomorrow! She wasn't going to let herself be sad and in despair like that time when they meet!

Ch. 08

I'll be honest. This is the first time I've seen such a long line. This long line I'm talking about is the empress's horse-carriage escort. I now understood why the empress doesn't easily leave the palace. It's not because she doesn't like to, but because there is too much to prepare when the ruler goes out on a tour. The ruler's horse-carriage is pulled by eight horses in a very extravagant fashion. The Valkyries all wore white robes and rode on white horses around the empress's horse-carriage. The cavalry were around the more outer-section of the formation. In the rear were the horse-carriages carrying the empress's maids who attend to her. And then there were the guys and ordinary soldiers. And they even transported food and gold for the sake of coming with me to that city.

The extravagant escort was like a huge snake. The denizens who saw the empress' horse-carriage all had to kneel down and salute her. Mom sat in her horse-carriage and looked out from behind her black veil. She sighed and said: "This took two weeks to prepare for so mommy isn't willing to leave like this. It's honestly too much trouble, tires the people and is a waste of money."

"You're basically a bird in a cage then mom. You conquered this land yet you are locked in the tiny palace."

I looked at mom with sympathy. Mom is the kind of person who can't sit still. She likes horse-riding, swinging her sword and running around freely outside. Mom isn't a chicken with no wings. She's an eagle that toils outside. Mom is now entertained with luxury in every way, but mom must miss those years where she was on the battlefield with her soldiers in the harsh weather most. Mom pulled off a long-distance raid on her own in the desert back then. The entire world was hers. But mom can only move about in that small palace now.

"This is mommy's choice. As the empress, mommy has to be responsible for these people. Since they believe in me, I can't be wilful." Mom smiled and held me in her arms. She stroked my head and softly continued, "All mommy wants is a world with you. Mommy has never hated mommy's identity as the empress and inability to leave. Mommy's only regret was not bringing you back with

mommy back then..... However, mommy would probably have regretted it even more if mommy brought you into a dangerous place.”

Mom's hand calluses are a result of all those years, but they were still warm nonetheless. Mom used to be a stranger to hugging and stroking me. However, she now does all that incomparably gently. At mom's side, I found mom slowly became a kind mother at my side from her role as the venerable empress.

Mom let go of me and suggested: “Son, you should go and ride out in front so that everybody can see you. They can't look up at me, but it'd be good for them to see you and get to know the next emperor.”

“Alright.”

I pulled open the horse-carriage window. Nier turned around to look at me. Only the royal family knows about Nier and me for now so Nier still rode alongside us as a Valkyrie outside. However, those who are attentive would be able to tell. Nier had the royal family's coat of arms on her chest. That is an honour a Valkyrie would never have.

I must confess. Something else happened today that led to Nier still being a little unhappy... And that was that she found her Valkyrie uniform surprisingly a little tight for her.....

She looked at me and in a courteous voice void of emotion like in the past asked me: “What is it, your majesty?”

I looked at her and replied: “Bring a horse over. I'm going to ride in front.”

Nier nodded and then came back with a horse not long after. I opened the carriage-door. It takes some skill to jump from a moving horse-carriage onto another horse... I got onto the horse, tapped it with my foot and then hustled up to the front of the escort. The cavalry now behind me picked up their horns and blew them.

Why do elves and humans do this? What, are the two races from the same school?!

The people around raised their head up and looked at me. They cheered for me..... Of course, I don't know how many of those cheers were actually sincere. I personally believe them to all be fake because I've never done anything

worthy of their worship. Destroying the church and absorbing Castor doesn't provide them with any obvious benefit. According to what mom said, it will be hard for me to win the peoples' support unless I achieve military accomplishments.

From my side, Nier sneakily reached her hand out and grabbed a corner of my cape. I looked at her but she didn't look at me. However, I noticed that she wore a grin that was hard to spot. While she wore a cold expression in front of others, she was still tightly holding a corner of my cape in secret.

Nier is seriously... way too cute.....

I really wanted to pull Nier into my arms. But I'll probably get beaten to death by her if I did since we can't announce our relationship publicly right now. We haven't gotten married yet after all. I personally feel that it would be best for me to accomplish something praiseworthy before being lovey-dovey in front of everyone like with the deer hunting festival on the elven side. I would be able to be with Lucia now if that crisis didn't take place that time. But then I probably would've missed out on Nier.

What do I need to do to win the acknowledgement of the people here in humanity? I've been acknowledged by the royal family. Now how do I get the people to acknowledge me? Mom is an empress that can't be questioned. She is the empress of victory that conquered virtually the entire continent. But as for me... I don't even have a title.

Titles aren't just what you want them to be, but what everyone believes you to be worth. Only that way will you have credibility. I really want a chuunibyou title, but I haven't accomplished anything for people to respectfully address me as something something king, or something something emperor.

I smiled and waved at the people. I heard horse hooves behind me and Freya soon appeared next to me. She smiled and said: "Onii-sama, you look like you are really pleased with yourself now."

"Do I? I'm just revealing myself in case people don't recognise me."

"Did you not used to think that the less number of people recognised you, the easier it was to move around? Are you no longer willing to go around as a commoner? I guess it is fair. You will soon have your own domain. That is your

most important place.”

Freya chuckled cheerfully and continued, “Manage your domain well. Then follow her majesty’s orders to advance and maybe very soon, you will become the next emperor. But you must also consider how you are going to get all of the ministers and officials of the empire to submit to you and obey you.”

“I really want to know too.”

“Are you not looking for a way right now?”

Freya winked at me and then continued, “If you can get the people in your domain to acknowledge you, then you will be able to get the people of a nation to acknowledge you. If you can get the people of a nation to acknowledge you, then you will be able to conquer all the lands. That was the path her majesty walked, and it is the same for you. Onii-sama, please do not disregard or dislike the domain as being small for it is your starting point as the emperor!”

Ch. 09

The trip from the royal capital northward was very interesting because while the royal capital in the south was on a large plain with relatively moderate weather conditions. It certainly was very cold in winter, but nowhere near as cold as it was in the north. Further, the snow in the north is a big nuisance. You couldn't miss the snow slowly piling up more and more as well as the temperature dipping more and more as you went from the royal capital to the north. That said, north of the royal capital is where the elven border is. The four seasons in the elven lands are like spring, so once you reach a certain point and if you continue northward, then the temperature will rise slightly.

Due to the army being around, we couldn't go fast, but at the same time, they were the reasons we had plenty of food. It was different camping in the wild at night as well. Mom couldn't deal with being in the horse-carriage the entire time as I thought. Hence, as soon as we reached the part where there were no people on the roads, she switched to a horse.

It goes without saying that she kept her face-veil on. The empress will be fine if she loses her veil, and so will the Valkyries. But everybody else will be without their heads. Wearing a face-veil didn't slow the empress down though. She was elated. She'd do little sprint-spurts every now and then on her horse and then come back. I could tell that she was very happy to get that opportunity.

Castell sat down beside me and helped himself to a dried piece of meat without standing on ceremony. He then drank a few mouthfuls of grape wine and with a smile said: "You will arrive at your domain tomorrow, your majesty. Gosh, this is a tiring trip. It looks like I am old now."

I shook my head while smiling and asked: "Castell, you're only five or six years older than me, aren't you? What do you mean you're old? I mean, look at Alice. She's much older and isn't she riding on her horse cheerfully?"

Alice who was seated next to another fire turned her head around. She revealed a friendly smile and said: "Your majesty, I cannot pretend I did not hear that."

I was frightened by her and my whole body very much felt my fear, so I quickly apologised. Mom laughed out loud and then wrapped her arm around Alice again and continued drinking. Castell pursed his lips into a smile and continued: "It looks like it is not just her majesty who is excited. You seem very excited too, your majesty."

"It is my domain after all."

"However, your majesty, I must remind you that your domain cannot be considered rich. It would be more correct to say it is barren. Of course, that is not her majesty's fault. Her majesty noted that the food-production volume there was acceptable. But when I looked into it, I discovered that the food-production volume reported was false. And as it sits on the border, it does not show any indication of prosperity. As such, you will have to work hard."

Castell shook his head. He tossed a block of wood into the fire and added, "But I do not think her majesty sent you here just to live leisurely and hunt like nobles. I surmise that she sent you here intending for you to work properly as well. Should you be able to solve this and grow this domain to prosper, then I believe her majesty will pleased and comforted."

I nodded. I don't think she gave me this domain for me to party away merrily. If she wants me to become a qualified emperor, then she needs to see my management skills. Unfortunately, I'm an engineering student. I've never taken lessons on economics or management. But according to what Freya stated, making the most of human resources is a skill a king must have.

I should forego my do-it-myself approach I've employed in the past. I need to find capable individuals to work for me. I'm now a member of the royal family, the next emperor in line, yet I continue to think like a commoner as I previously did. There will be people who will be strong for me even if I'm not, so I don't need to personally attend to everything now.

"I can understand if it's not prospering, but why is food-production lacking? Could it be that the land is extremely barren?"

Castell shook his head and then nodded. He replied: "I am not sure about that. I am not a specialist at assessing the land, nor have I worked in agriculture. However, I do not think that this piece of land is barren. It looks very fertile

because there is an elven forest there as well as a running river, which functions as a perfect irrigation system. Logically speaking, there should be no shortage of food there, but in reality.... Mm, I shall stop there. You should be the one to handle this matter. I cannot tell you anymore.”

Castell wore a mysterious smile and then continued, “Your majesty, once you arrive there, I think you should deal with this matter. The people are very easy to handle. They are ignorant. They do not need any literacy, poems or music. They just need hot water, women and food. But they do not even have food right now. If that continues, the people will be unhappy.”

“The three things you mentioned are basically the same as what Freya mentioned. I understand now. I will investigate the matter. Thank you, Castell.” I stood up and then indicated I was returning to my tent. Castell stood up to bow and wish me goodnight before leaving.

When I returned to my own tent, Luna had already set the floor-beds. A soft layer of wool was laid on top of the thick mat, and on top of that was a thick blanket.

As Luna looked at me, she asked me with a smile: “Your majesty, will we arrive tomorrow?”

“Yes.” I nodded and added, “I’m still somewhat excited since it will be my world once I get there.”

“Except it does not look like your world is too peaceful.” Freya poked her head out from the side with a smile on her face. She then made an open hand gesture and continued, “I apologise for eavesdropping on your conversation, onii-sama. It looks like your first test has come quite early. Castell is right. If we do not resolve this matter, I do not think that we will win the support of the people. Needless to say, if you do not care, then neither do I.”

“Of course I want everyone to obey me. I still need to get them to work for me.”

“In that case, onii-sama, we will have lots of work to do.” Freya looked at me and then stroked her chin like she entered deep thought. She then asked: “Onii-sama, have you heard of a phrase that says, ‘face the grudges of others with a smile’?”

“Repay evil with gratitude and kindness?”

“Ah... why do you speak so with such poetic eloquence.....? I feel like you just said something I do not understand... Whatever the case, that is what it means. I presume that the current residents there are very unhappy with you, one, because you suddenly came and announced that you are going to rule it with a weak foundation, and two, would be getting the people to work for your large-scale constructions. Most importantly, all the benefits the corrupt officials had previously will now go to you, hence why you will face much resentment.”

“Yeah... I’m sad about it too since it’s not what I did. It seems that getting married and living my newly-wed life there peacefully will be very difficult. Freya, why do I feel that the people will drive me away if I’m hated by people..... If I were to share my food supply with them and keep taxes low, would that help a little?”

Needless to say, I was just kidding about that. I wouldn’t be that miserable.

“Labour and taxes are bound to make the people dissatisfied. However, it is a necessity.” Freya shrugged indifferently and continued, “The resentment of the people is meaningless. But as you want to rule, you will need them to get them to serve you on their own accord. Your statement ‘repay evil with gratitude and kindness’ is actually wrong. We cannot continue to just fulfil the desires of the people to please them. We must use our fairness and justice to give them no way of resenting us. Onii-sama, if one is strong, be also merciful, so that one’s neighbours may respect one rather than fear one. We are not a benevolent ruler nor are we a tyrant. You are to become a fair and just hero!”

Ch. 10

The escort entered the city, which seemed like it had sprouted out of the ground, in a glamorous fashion.

It would usually take years, or even decades for a city to be established and thrive. However, it didn't even take a week to construct the city with the assistance of the elves' magic. It looks like Mom personally took to the field. Vyvyan's magic can allow her to build a complete structure with materials.

That said, I'm certain that Vyvyan didn't use materials with mana to construct the city since Mommy Elizabeth said that my body can't come into contact with mana in its current state.

The city erupted from the ground on an empty plain with a lush forest at the end of the plain.

Our horse hooves were now covered in layers of snow like willow catkins.

The elves reside next to the city, so the temperature is really nice. The snow falling down from the sky wasn't excruciatingly cold, like before, and to the contrary gave off a mildly warm sensation.

The wasteland surrounding the city had been opened up for farming.

I went out of my way to stop and take a look at it, however; the fields were currently empty. It just looked like a blanket of snow. A river flowed next to the city as if intended to guard it. The flowing river seemed like it was moisturising the land.

The river didn't freeze even in winter because it was water that came from the elven lands. The water was clear, as though not a speck of gravel was to be found. The river flowed at a moderate pace. There were aqueducts dug up by the farmers, which created a separate area from the block of land. It looks like it's the same as any other field.

It didn't appear as though the people here were slacking or anything. The crops here were the exact same as on the plains in the south. However, the

food in the imperial capital wasn't worth much money because the land on the large southern plains of the continent had the richest land.

Mom went through a lot of trouble to repair the land. Rotational tillage, aqueducts, windmills, watermills, everything was there.

The tall mountains by the sea kept typhoons and rainstorms out. There was only the warm, moisturising air, winds, and rain from the elven side, so the southern plains have always had fertile lands, thereby providing great harvests every year.

That's why the Rosvenor Empire earned the envy of everyone around. It was the best place to produce food from in the south.

"Let's go, Onii-sama. You will not be able to figure out anything with the naked eye." Freya gave me a nudge from beside me.

I nodded and then continued riding toward the city which belonged to me. For a moment, it felt surreal. I've been to many cities and seen many 'insert person or place welcomes you' signs. However, this was the first city that completely belonged to me. Every pebble and every resident here were my assets.

I looked up and saw the large city gates before me. Atop the city gates were the words 'Troy's City'.

The golden letters shone in my eyes and shined on all of us like a spotlight. I looked at the city and spaced out. Everything here was mine. This place is the starting point of my own journey, right?

I used to struggle under Mom's care. I wanted to do lots of things, but couldn't. But, now, I've come to a city that belongs to me. I wasn't able to give orders in the past, but I could now command the people of a city.

"Don't cry... Your Highness... I will... I will... watch you... become... become... an outstanding king..."

'Can you see this, Mera? If you can see this, this shiny-gold light, would you smile? What does this shiny gold view look like from heaven? I don't know if I can become an outstanding king, but for you, to let you witness it, I shall advance along this path without stopping.'

'Thank you, Mera.'

'I've taken revenge for you and know about your grievance. It was my fault I couldn't protect you. It was because I was weak. But I won't let that sort of thing happen again.'

'Rest in peace, Mera.'

"What do you think, Your Majesty? Her Majesty personally wrote those letters. She then said that City meant 'nest'. It seems that Her Majesty has no talent for naming, but that also shows the meaning of this city, which is Troy, your nest, Your Majesty."

Castell chuckled softly, and then the escort stopped at the entrance. Castell tugged on his horse reins and then made an invitational hand gesture.

He said, "You must be the first to enter, Your Majesty, as this is your nest. Just like Hillier City, the Phoenix's Nest. Troy City must now rise under your rule. I hope that the light of prosperity at Troy's City will brighten the night sky when the South's Hillier City household lights light up one day."

"I'll consider that a good luck charm."

I smiled before riding over to the entrance and stood in the shadow formed by the city gate. I looked at the perfectly set stone path in the city.

This place was designed exactly as Freya and I designed it. On both sides of the stone path ahead were the denizens bowing, awaiting our arrival. These people were residents of the small town originally here, as well as people from other villages in the surroundings. They came here after the new city had been built. However, I could see that they weren't happy to move into the city. To the contrary, they wore bitter expressions.

"Let's go, Your Majesty." Nier and Freya came up behind me.

I turned around to look at them and then asked, "Where's Luna?"

Nier pursed her lips with dissatisfaction and replied, "Luna is but just a personal servant. She has no right to walk behind you."

I commanded Nier without allowing her any chance to say anything, "Call her here."

Nier looked at me and sighed before riding to the back.

Not long after, Luna was seated atop Nier's horse with a scared and excited gaze as she came over beside me. She softly said, "Your Majesty... Your Majesty... I do not think that this is a good idea... I... I..."

"You what?"

"I am just a personal servant... My status cannot compare to Miss Freya and Miss Nier's... I... I have no right to stand by your side."

"Yes, yes." I stroked her head with a smile and then looked at the gigantic golden letters. I said, "You have no right as my personal servant. But do you have the right to enter the city behind me as the friend of the prince, the master of Troy's City?"

"Your Majesty!"

Luna cheerfully nodded, while Nier shook her head helplessly. Freya chuckled and said, "Let us go, Onii-sama. Remember those by your side as you step onto this stone path. This will be your starting point. And of course, I will not let it be your endpoint. Your end point is the throne in the royal palace of Hillier City. I am not ruling out the possibility that a throne might be moved into this city. A throne that belongs to you, that is. Not everyone has the determination to become a king, but you are different. You have the determination and courage to become a king. While very immature, an eagle that struggles through the turbulence will eventually make it to the sky!"

"Alright. Thank you, Freya."

Freya's words revved me up and made my blood dance. I kicked my horse. It neighed and then walked into the shadow of the city gates.

"Welcome Your Majesty, Prince of the Rosvenor Empire, Prince Troy Galadriel Rosvenor!!!"

The people welcomed me loudly, but the vibe they gave was like when I was dealing with leaders in middle school. You would not call out with sincerity, from the heart, if you didn't know someone or if you didn't know he was important to you.

But that's fine.

I'll definitely make them obey me from the bottom of their hearts, follow my lead, and conquer for me!

Ch. 11

The tallest places in the centre of the city were the city hall and my residence.

Since I'm just a prince, my so-called palace couldn't be considered a complete palace. It wasn't even half the size of the elven imperial palace. But considering the people by my side, it would be pointless even if it was larger.

The outer palace alone was enough for me to mess around in. My palace is basically a square palace. The guards pulled the door open. The floor was made of smooth and white marble. A lawn and a flower bed were arranged on the side, except that they hadn't grown yet. In the centre of the plaza in front of the palace was a huge water fountain. The fountain was a statue of a person wielding a sword atop a horse...

'Wait! Isn't that me?!"

'I'm still alive damn it! I'm still alive! I don't think it's such a good idea to make a statue out of me!'

But it looks like they don't share that belief here.

After we had entered the palace, the stablemen and servants who had been waiting for a long time started busying themselves. The maids and guards the empress brought along also began to hand over jobs, as well as beginning to moving items.

I arrived at the entrance of the palace, took in a deep breath and stepped up onto the steps.

This place is mine, now.

"Mom, have Vyvyan and Lucia arrived?" When I turned around to ask Mom, who was sitting behind me, that question, she paused and looked at me slightly unhappy.

She replied, "Son, does that woman have to be the first thing you think about, upon arriving here for the first time? Mommy accompanied you on such a long

trip, but you didn't even thank Mommy after arriving, and instead asked about that woman first... Mommy is a little unhappy, now. No, Mommy is very... very unhappy, now..." Mom showed her displeasure with her entire body.

If I could see murderous intent then her murderous intent right now could cover the entire sky... I swiftly shook my head.

I looked at Mom, who had her head down and her fists clenched tightly, and smiled helplessly. I explained to her, "Mom... Mom... that's not it... that's not it... I'm not thinking about just her... it's just... it's just that I haven't seen her in a long time, so I thought she'd be here waiting for me..."

Mom folded her arms angrily and went "hmph" before looking away, refusing to answer my question.

'Come on, why are you acting like a young girl getting jealous? Don't you think it's not a good idea to be acting like this at your age, and with people around? What do you want me to do to make you happy? Hugs? Kisses? A princess carry?'

Ah, I looked at Mom's bosom rise and fall. I don't think I could carry Mom... I smiled mischievously and walked up to Mom's side. I wrapped my arm around her arm and acted coquettishly, "Alright, alright, Mom, don't be angry, Mom. Of course, I care about you. I'm very grateful that you accompanied me on such a long trip... So don't be angry~. I'll do anything if you stop being angry, Mom."

Mom snorted and then turned her head to look at me. With a tinge of excitement, she asked, "Anything?"

"Mom, mind yourself a bit... Nier is right next to us..."

"Whatever do you mean? What are you thinking, Son?!" Mom looked at me slightly unhappy. She continued, "But I do hope that you can come and dance with me at the evening banquet in two days' time. Yep, that's what I want. Son, I won't be angry if you promise me that."

"Really? I can promise you that. I'll dance with you on the night then... I was planning to anyway. But I'm not good at dancing Mom..." I dawdled.

Her request was unexpectedly simple. I didn't even need to sell my body... I feel like I'm quite pitiful. Everyone else who goes to another world has women

seducing him, or they undergo a gender change and seduce others. But I'm using my body as a male to appease my mothers.

'Is there any other dimensional traveller who's more pitiful than I am? Tell me!!'

"It's okay, it's okay. Mommy is happy just to dance with you. Mommy shall go along with you!" Mom immediately revealed a smile, even though it wasn't exactly very visible since she still had her black face-veil on...

Alice smiled helplessly as she watched the empress' excited and immature behaviour in front of her son. She didn't know what to say. Countless people wouldn't even dare to dream of dancing with the empress. His Majesty was blessed with great fortune to have the right to dance with her. However, the empress's elated mood as she spoke of the dance was like a young girl proposing a date and her crush agreeing.

She was the empress who stood above all, yet she was acting like a cheerful young girl in front of her son just to get a little closer to him.

Alice had never seen the empress delicate like this before. It appeared she was right. Regardless of how excellent His Majesty was, how diligent he was or how competent he was as a wise ruler, he weakened the empress's courage and determination. The empress is a brave general who slew her enemies, yet she was all giddy because she could dance with her son now.

She was no longer the empress but a lovesick young girl chasing her first love. She was no longer the empress who thought about how to rule a country and bring down cities, but an idiotic mother who'd get upset because she couldn't cook well or make clothes well.

'It's all His Majesty's fault! No, it's not that he did anything wrong, but that his very existence itself is a mistake!'

'His Majesty must be eliminated. Her Majesty will only be Her Majesty when His Majesty disappears. The empire can be without him, but it can't be without Her Majesty! As Her Majesty's personal attendant, I must eliminate all threats from Her Majesty's side!'

'His Majesty didn't do anything wrong, but his existence is a mistake!'

When I stepped into the palace, I discovered that it was in no way different to a normal palace. It was basically the same as the one I lived in previously, except that it was now a square-shaped building.

My room was on the second floor. Outside of the massive window was the palace's courtyard with a small white pavilion. However, the flowers and grass around had yet to grow.

I believe that this place will be a magnificent scene to behold in summer.

Luna scanned the huge room with curiosity, and then said, "This place is larger than the bedroom in the outer court. It sure makes it clear that it is the room of the master of the palace... I only went to Her Majesty's inner court once. This place is almost the same size as Her Majesty's room... Ah, there is a secret door here. Hehe, Your Majesty, my room is connected."

There was a secret door on the wall next to the window. Well, it doesn't really count as a secret door, because it's a very visible timber door that opens by hinging.

Behind the door was Luna's room. Freya checked it out curiously and said, "It's a double bedroom. This must be your personal servant and guard's room. It looks like it will be where Miss Nier and Miss Luna live together. It is similar to the outer court, except that now..."

Freya looked my way and then hugged my arm. She looked at Nier out in the courtyard with excitement, giggled, and said, "It looks like this will be Miss Luna's room and mine."

"Freya, you have your own room, don't you?"

"Yes."

Freya giggled softly and then blushed. She added, "But I feel that it is safer sleeping next to you, Your Majesty..."

Nier turned her head around and said, "I can't pretend I didn't hear that..."

"Miss Nier, there is no need for you to be angry. Or should I call you 'sister-in-law'?"

"You're a good girl, Freya... call me that again. Call me that again!"

'Oi, oi, oi, miss, aren't you too easy?!"

Glossary

*Making a statue of someone while they're still alive is considered bad luck in traditional Chinese and Vietnamese culture because it's the equivalent of saying you're dead. It's basically the same as setting up an altar for someone who's still alive.

Ch. 12

While supporting me, Nier said, "Her Majesty was such in a good mood tonight. That's the first time I've seen Her Majesty get drunk."

I weakly leaned on Nier and murmured, "Ah... yeah... I'm drunk, too... I feel really sick..."

Mom looked really happy today. Not only did she drink one cup after another, but she even sang loudly at the end.

I must say, Mom's singing is... so-so... I'm not sure if her voice was affected because she was drunk, or if she was just poor at singing, to begin with. However, we still had to humour Mom when she sang...

I wonder what Vyvyan's singing is like. Elves should have very graceful voices, so Vyvyan shouldn't have a problem with singing.

Tonight's banquet wasn't an official one. It was just a simple dinner to celebrate our arrival. However, if you were to consider the dishes served, it was anything but a simple dinner.

All of the food served was available in the city. I gave the dishes extra attention. The meat, hot soup and smoked fish were all quite good.

Judging by the food, this city shouldn't have to deal with starvation. However, according to Castell, there was indeed a food shortage.

When I got back to my room, I sat on my bed.

Nier carefully undid the buttons on my clothes, leaving just my under-shirt. She stroked my face and said with a smile, "Your Majesty... did you... want to... that... we... tonight...?"

"Sorry, Nier... I'm feeling a little lightheaded..."

"It's alright. I'll do the moving." Nier licked her lips and then knelt down beside the bed and stared intently below my waist-line, like a hunting-dog getting the approval to dig in from its master.

"... Alright, alright. You win. You win." I gave up and lay back on the bed. I was done. I had completely given up... Let her knock herself out as long as I don't have to die.

I fully believe that Nier will soon be pregnant. I'll be safe once she's pregnant. At least I can get a one-year break! Yes! I'll get at least a one-year break!

"I apologise, sister-in-law. If possible, I would like to borrow Onii-sama for a bit." Freya stepped out from her room just as Nier was about to pull my leather belt off.

She didn't panic at all despite seeing what we were doing. Nope, she didn't even blush.

Nier looked at her angrily, frowned and asked, "What do you want to borrow His Majesty for?"

"Of course it will not be for what you are doing." Freya chuckled softly and then continued, "It is about work, or rather, the work that is coming up."

"His Majesty is drunk, now. Discuss it tomorrow."

"If Onii-sama is already asleep, what are you doing?"

'Forget it. You could give Nier forever, and she wouldn't be able to out-talk Freya. Freya usually would never disturb me when I'm sleeping. This is the first time she's made an exception which means that it's important business.' I sat up and looked at Nier apologetically.

I then looked at Freya and asked, "What's the matter?"

"Onii-sama, it is a debt issue."

"Ah? Do you owe someone money? Just pay them back, then. If you don't have enough, just let me know and I'll go ask Her Majesty for some, just as long as it's not a ridiculous amount."

"No, it is not I who owe someone money, but others who owe you money. And a large amount for that matter. The debt would require everyone in this city to not eat, not drink, and work to pay the debt. And even then, it would take about fifty years to pay it off."

While Freya wore a teasing smile, I could see that this was definitely no minor

matter from the look in her eyes.

My brain switched back on. I wore my clothes back on and stood up. I walked over to Freya and then turned my head around to tell Nier, "Sorry Nier, I'll be back soon."

Nier nodded with a slightly disappointed look and replied, "I will wait for you to come back then."

"All right."

I went with Freya to her room.

Luna was already asleep. She must be exhausted from today.

There was a candle on the table on one side, and underneath the flame was an account book. It looks like Freya has been scanning through these books ever since she came back. This place used to be comprised of small towns and villages, so when you stacked all the account books together, it was one tall stack. That said, they look like they've all been opened, now.

I took a look and saw the debts that villages owed the landlords. That's not quite right. They were the debts they owed the empire.

The people pay taxes to the tax official. The tax official hands it over to the lords of the domains, and then the lords of the domains send the annual total to the royal family.

What I noticed was that most of the debts the people owed were food debts.

No, not a food shortage, but poor harvests, which forced the people to sell more food in order to make enough to pay taxes. In reality, according to the laws of the empire, if a region has a poor harvest or suffers from a natural disaster, then the tax they must pay for the year is reduced or even annulled.

Mom understands the habits and characteristics of officials, but she's also too lazy to go and arrest every single one of them.

How much in taxes a region must pay is decided upon their situation for the particular year in question. They just need to pay ninety-percent of what's required, which circumvents the officials from illegally selling food or arms.

The problem lies with the officials who were previously in charge of this area.

They forged numbers, even when harvests were poor, and embezzled more than ten percent.

Here comes the problem. The people, who didn't have much food in the first place, then had to sell even more food, thereby leaving them with barely any food left over.

To make matters worse, when the palace was built, we naturally had to replenish the food warehouse. The food in the palace was from collecting the remaining food.

Though we did purchase the food from the people, the people can't refuse to sell it because it's an order from the royal family. There's no room for questioning there. Refusal would be treated as treason, and you'd be sentenced to death.

This had a snowball effect on the people.

As the snowball rolled, their debts increased into this number that was making my hairs stand up. Rather than calling them my people, it wouldn't be too far-fetched to call them my slaves! They were slaving away to repay a massive debt. They were doomed to never leave this city.

For me, this was a city, a city where I would take the first steps to becoming emperor. But to them, this was a prison designed to gather them all here.

"That is how it is. Actually, this is the case in many places."

When Freya saw my expression, she shrugged and then continued, "A village is a village, a lord of a domain is a lord of a domain. Under normal circumstances, the two are only connected by tax matters. Officials have no right to interfere with the people's freedom as long as they pay their taxes. That is if they were lords that were not greedy."

"In that case, the lives of the people on this land would be none of their business. However, if the lord wanted to extort the people, how would they control the people and prevent them from leaving?"

"Answer; by chaining them down with taxes. If they did not pay the tax amount required annually, their debt would be recorded. So even if they had no way of culturing the land in winter, the interest would still continue to increase,

nonetheless. A year later, the people's harvest in the second year would only be enough for them to pay off their debt from last year while their tax due for this year would be another year owed..."

"The process would repeat itself like that afterwards. The people and the lord have no direct connection, but they have become the lord's slave as a result of their debt. As a result, the people must provide whatever the lord asks of them. That is the most frightening thing."

"But... but... are you saying that the empire is completely in the dark about this? ... Are you saying that Mom is unaware?"

"Her Majesty definitely knows, but what does it have to do with her?" Freya looked at me and explained, "The Empire collected the taxes, and the officials and lords fulfilled their duties, so is there any reason for Her Majesty to bother with the origins of the money? Her Majesty also needs the lords and officials. And it so happens to be that said lords and officials are well aware that the empress knows what they are up to."

"They are afraid of Her Majesty and therefore definitely will not try to do anything to her. And when the people's rage explodes, Her Majesty can use the crimes she has not yet charged them for as a reason to conveniently execute them. Thus, the people are appeased. That would only serve to bolster the empress' just image in the people's hearts."

"That is political trickery, Onii-sama. Just officials and lords, who do not have personal interests, always have grand ambitions. They are a valuable asset in times of war. However, Her Majesty will definitely not allow the officials serving her to harbour any grand ambitions in times of peace and prosperity."

My hands and feet went ice-cold as I looked at the account records before me. What I heard made me completely sober.

'I never knew there would be such a thing happening. Is the fairness and justice I've always pursued something impossible to achieve? Just how dark is the world that I want? I've always been in the royal palace watching the people in the royal capital. I never imagined there would be such connections.'

Freya folded her arms. She looked at me as if she was smiling but at the same time not and said, "Your Majesty, if I were you... I would start collecting taxes..."

Ch. 13

The empress placed her teacup down, watched the tea inside swish around gently and remarked, “It sounds noisy outside.”

“Yes. It looks like His Majesty has begun to move.” Castell picked up the teapot but didn’t pour the empress any more tea.

The empress went to look outside. However, the frosty windows covered her view. She was unaware of what was happening outside.

Castell smiled as he watched the empress. He then asked, “Your Majesty, shall we go and take a look?”

The empress looked outside. Actually, she was just looking at the frosty windows. There was both anticipation and concern in her eyes, but she didn’t answer Castell, and he didn’t press her for an answer.

Having served the empress for so many years, his experience told him that when the empress doesn’t answer, she’s most likely thinking. It was best not to disturb her while she was thinking.

After a long period of thinking, the empress chuckled softly, grasped her teacup and said, “Don’t worry about it. There’s no need to go. This is his palace. We’re all guests. I won’t interfere with my son’s business. I’ll leave this all to him. If he fails, I’ll carry him back to the royal capital and let him continue being my son in peace.”

The empress chuckled and then jeered at herself, “I feel like I’m becoming more and more self-contradictory. On one hand, I hope my son succeeds. But on the other hand, I don’t want him to succeed. I’m becoming stranger and stranger.”

“No. You are just becoming more and more like a mother.”

“Really? I’m very happy if that’s the case.” The empress chuckled and hid her face behind her teacup.

It looked like she had a faint smile and was blushing under the sunlight.

Castell looked at the empress before him with a smile.

The empress's smile and blush looked like the wings of an angel underneath the bright and warm sun. The empress always looked so bright whenever her son was mentioned.

I walked to the water-fountain by the entrance and looked at the girls sobbing and trembling below.

They all looked helplessly thin and fragile. They didn't look clean either. All of them wore rough-cloth clothing with a fair number of them wearing clothes that had been patched up. They hugged each other tightly, seeking their last shred of courage from one another's warmth and bodies.

They looked up. Their teary eyes were also full of despair, torment and hatred.

I looked at the guard captain and asked, "Is that all of them?"

The guard captain nodded and replied, "All the girls from families with girls have been brought here. Healthy and fit young men have also been taken to the army camp."

I looked at him and questioned him, "Did you guys get rough with them?"

The guard captain hesitated for a moment and then replied, "Some families refused to hand their family members over and attacked us with weapons. We, therefore, retaliated and knocked a few people down. However, we did not kill anyone. We made sure to explain to them that we wanted their family members and we did not snatch their family members."

"Good." I nodded and then turned to look at the group of young girls below. I cleared my throat gently.

The guard captain beside me pointed his gun up to the sky and fired a shot. He then shouted, "Before you is the Prince of the Rosvenor Empire, Prince Troy Galadriel Rosvenor! He is now going to speak. All of you shut up and listen closely. I will open fire if anyone moves or cries! Understood?!"

"I want to go home!! I want to go home!! My father and mother are at home

as well as my three-year old brother! I want to go home! I want to go home!” A girl cried loudly and suddenly stood up and ran to the door.

The guards around quickly stopped her, brought her back and tossed her into the group.

Freya, who was standing at the side, grabbed a gun and walked up to her. She pointed the muzzle at her forehead and calmly said, “Think it over carefully, Miss. If I open fire now, your parents and your brother won’t get to see you again. If you obediently comply, you will be able to see them again. If you continue to resist His Majesty’s orders, nobody will get to see you. Weigh the pros and cons for yourself, miss.”

The girl with the muzzle at her head let our sobs of despair.

Freya smashed her in her face with the gun without any hesitation and said, “You were warned. No crying. No shouting. Listen to what His Majesty has to say.”

The girls down below all went dead silent. Not one of them dared to speak, and all the sobbing came to a halt.

I watched Freya slowly walk back.

I cleared my throat gently and then began, “Ladies, I am Prince Troy Galadriel Rosvenor. I believe that you all understand that it is perfectly reasonable for you to repay a debt owed. You are also aware that your parents owe tax fees. According to your debts, you would have to not eat or drink for fifty years to pay your debts off. Sorry, but I don’t have that much patience. And so I’ve thought of using you as a way to repay the debts. I did say ‘if you come here, I will annul your debts.’ Do you all acknowledge this?”

“... We do.”

“Good. Come into the palace then. Luna, you lead the way.”

“Understood.” Luna smiled as she bowed.

The young girls quivered as they stood up and held each other’s hands, due to fear. They followed Luna into the palace. I stayed standing where I was as I watched the girls leave. The girl that took a heavy hit from Freya was covering

her nose. She wanted to cry but didn't dare to. I walked over and handed my handkerchief to her.

"..."

"Wipe your face. I don't want your nose-blood to get on my palace floors." I turned around to leave and went back to Freya's side.

Freya nodded and said, "Not bad. Your Majesty, we have basically now neutralised their debts."

"I don't really want for them to be neutralised like this."

"You want to be fair and just, so you cannot just erase their debts without requiring anything of them. What will become of us if we erase their debts? We too require money for our own developments. We cannot give the people the impression that it is okay to not pay taxes to you, just act pitiful and they will not have to pay taxes. We must let them know the consequences of not paying their taxes."

Just as Freya was about to continue, a messenger came up before me and quietly said, "Your Majesty, the elven queen, Vyvyan, and Miss Lucia have arrived."

"Take them to my room for now. I still have some business to finish up with here." I kind of want to complain incessantly.

I still had these girls here to sort out.

'Why is it that Lucia sees me with other girls every time she comes back? Am I jinxed? And it isn't just one Nier this time. It was a group of girls this time... If Lucia found out I captured and brought this group of young girls into the palace, I'm afraid I would have to go searching for her again.'

"Roger."

The messenger left. I looked at Freya and smiled helplessly as I said, "It looks like we need to hurry up and wrap this up. I haven't seen Lucia in a long time. I honestly miss her, a little."

"You have always been lovey-dovey with Miss Nier, so I thought you had already forgotten about Miss Lucia." Freya giggled gently. She then suddenly

hugged my arm and kissed me on my cheek. I was shocked. My two legs went weak, and I almost dropped to my knees.

'Hey, Miss! Don't do this! Lucky Nier and Lucia aren't here. If we got caught, I'd cop another scolding... Nier will go even wilder at night!'

"Freya!"

"Hehe, playing with fire like this is so fun. Miss Lucia and Miss Nier will not blame me anyway." Freya smiled and released me. She then adjusted her expression and said, "Onii-sama, I suggest you adjust your expression. Otherwise, you will not be able to intimidate them in a bit."

"Haaa... man..."

"We have no choice, Your Majesty. We can choose not to pursue the debt, but we cannot erase their debts out of pity. You are a just king, not a benevolent king. They will only feel at ease paying their taxes once we let them know the consequences of not paying their taxes. There has never been any family that went bankrupt because of taxes. Onii-sama, you are saving them, not harming them."

Ch. 14

"Your Highness!!! Please explain why there are so many girls inside your palace as soon as I arrived!!" Lucia's entire body quivered as she shouted at me loudly, "One Nier is more than enough! What did you bring so many girls here for?! I won't allow it! I won't ever agree to it! I won't allow a third girl to get close to you! If you choose to persist stubbornly, let's duel! If I win, I'm going to kill every single one of them!!"

'Haha. I knew Lucia couldn't be stopped... I knew those guards couldn't stop Lucia...' I placed my hand on my forehead. If Lucia had not come today, my plan would be able to proceed smoothly, but now, I could see looks of despair on the faces of all of the girls. Luna covered her face feeling helpless. If I could hear her, I would probably hear Luna's heavy sigh, too.

I pulled Lucia over and whispered in her ear, "Lucia... don't get angry... I'm not interested in these girls. I'm serious. This is my first job as the lord of the city... So don't worry. You don't have to worry at all. I won't do anything to let you down! I definitely won't! I swear. Do you know how much I missed you? Do you want to sleep with me tonight, to celebrate?"

"No!" Lucia blushed a little. It looked like she didn't completely trust me, but at least her anger had now turned into suspicion.

I hugged her tightly, and she panted gently in my arms.

She snuggled up in my arms and quietly murmured, "Why does my scent always disappear so fast? Your Highness, we need to hug more in the future... tonight... We can... tonight..."

"Alright. Go and rest with Mom for now then. I'll come and look for you after I finish with business here."

Little Lucia isn't too hard to handle.

I looked over to Nier standing by my side with her arms folded and wearing a displeased look. Her body isn't large, so why is she like an endless chasm...

After I had sent Lucia away, I looked at the girls trembling behind Luna. I sighed and said, “Luna has already shown you the palace, right? That’s what it basically entails. A chef’s monthly salary is fifty silver empire coins. A maid’s monthly salary is ten empire silver coins. You get one off-day per week and will undergo basic training for three weeks.”

“Because you’re currently in debt, one-third of your salary will be deducted monthly as payment toward your debt, provided you’re willing to stay here. For the next five years, your salary will be guaranteed. What do you think? Are any of you willing to stay?”

The girls looked at me with astonishment.

I shrugged and said, “I won’t erase your entire debt. You owe the empire taxes. That’s Her Majesty’s money. I have no right to erase your debts. However, I can give you an opportunity to pay off your debts. You’ll be able to pay off your debts as long as you’re willing to work. I won’t make things hard for you during this period of time. But you won’t get any special rights, either. If you make mistakes at work or slack off, you’ll be fired as you would under normal circumstances. And your debt will still be outstanding, even after you are fired. If you then can’t pay your debt, I shall strip you of your freedom.”

The girls exchanged glances with each other. One of them then quivered as she asked, “Your Majesty... is... is this why you brought us here today?”

“Yes, that’s right. It’s up to you whether or not you’re willing to work in the palace. I’m just giving you an opportunity. As to whether or not you take it, I don’t care either way.” I looked at them and continued, “If you’re willing to work, sign your name and fill out your details with my sister, Freya, and then you can take two silver coins for coming here today, as well as a small bag of bread. Don’t take it the wrong way. I’m not pitying you. You deserve this. You built this palace for me.”

I turned around as a messenger ran up to me from behind and whispered to me, “We have sorted out the army camp. Some chose to join the army while some chose to work in the factory with the salary you stated.”

“Uhm.”

I nodded and then turned around to leave.

The young girls cried out in relief.

Freya looked at them and explained, “Onii-sama will not pity you, but neither will he make things hard for you. As long as you abide by the rules and work properly, Onii-sama will protect your normal rights. However, if you start trouble, Onii-sama will not hesitate to kill you, even if you did it for your family or are at a dead-end. Onii-sama is not a kind person, nor a tyrant. He is a just person.”

I heard their cries behind me and sighed.

It was just as Freya said last night. As the lord of the domain, I can’t let those beneath me feel a sense of benevolence. If I am lax with one month’s taxes, then there will be a second month.

A lord’s job is not to share his wealth with his people. That isn’t caring for the people, but a morbid way of taking care of them.

What a lord should be doing is thinking about how to allow those beneath them to earn enough to pay their taxes. That is what a lord should be thinking about. If we could cap the tax rate at eighty percent and the remainder was enough for the people to lead decent lives, they wouldn’t riot.

The way the people calculate taxes is very simple. They don’t mind how much the taxes are as long as they can be guaranteed to still have money to eat, go to bathhouses and have fun.

“A lord should not view those beneath him as people, but domesticated animals. Feeding them enough for them to roll over and sunbathe is sufficient. That is kings-craft.”

Though what Freya says sounds cruel and deplorable, it was the reality of the current situation.

I’m aware of human rights and democracy, but I would shake the foundations of the empire’s rule if I were to brashly launch such movements during a time where the financial state and ability to produce aren’t at adequate stages.

In such an era where ignorance rules peoples’ minds, you only need a wise ruler.

Only once the peoples' material needs have been satisfied will they go and think about life and philosophies. But at present, the people beneath me don't even have food, so I'm not going to make them undergo some sort of spiritual and mental revolution.

That would be the equivalent of jumping into a fire.

I sighed a breath of relief.

'The resentment of the people should be no more, now, right? We don't have to worry about workers in the palace and their diligence, either now. Next is waiting for the red-haired lady and my guards to arrive, then I'll be able to officially start here. Troy City will be able to officially start operating once they arrive.'

'I've also left with them the impression that I'm a just lord. Not only did I erase the high-interest rates which chained them with unrealistic debts, I've even provided them with jobs, as well as warned them of the consequences of not paying off their debts. Freya's carrot and stick policy sure is incredible.'

'Oh, right. I still need to come up with a way to deal with the land. I need to make some time to go and check it out with Freya. I suspect that Freya is almighty. She always comes up with fantastic ideas no matter what happens.'

Just as I passed a corner, someone yanked open the door to a room and pulled me in before I could turn to look at their face. A hand covered my eyes and before I knew it, a pair of warm lips and a tongue had sealed my mouth, preventing me from calling out.

'Nier?!"

'No! Nier should be by Freya's side right now!'

'Then this person is... is...'

"Son... my son... my son... Ah... My whole body burns up whenever I think of my son... My son... My son..." A pair of hands glided all over my body without any reserve.

A fragrant tongue burnt my tongue and twirled itself around mine like it wanted to swallow mine. This half-biting half-kissing type of kiss made my

entire body weak. Sharp teeth then bit my lips and their owner sucked my blood up aggressively.

'Mom?! Vyvyan?!"

Ch. 15

Mom sucked intensely. Her chest, which was rising and falling in front of my eyes, made me dizzy. Mom virtually sucked all the oxygen out of my lungs. Mom positioned her face very close to mine, nearly touching my face. I could feel her eyelashes brush against me. I couldn't breathe with her so close, while Mom's face, which was right in front of my eyes, was blurry.

Mom let go and took a step back.

I panted for air.

Mom's blood-red eyes were like a flame that could burn me to death.

Mom panted and then with a dazed look stuck her hands she held me with in her mouth...

'She licked them! She licked her fingers that she touched me with! What the hell is going on?! What the devil happened? While Vyvyan does behave like this, she only behaves like this on full moon nights. The last full moon night was only over ten days ago. It's still a while until the next full moon, so what's wrong with Mommy Vyvyan?!"

I looked at Mom fearfully and called out to her, "Mom?"

I then immediately regretted it. I shouldn't have called 'Mom' in that moment.

Hearing me call them 'Mom' was something worth fighting a war to the death over to my two moms. Calling Mom 'Mom' when she's sensitive will basically make her go completely berserk.

Mom's *oppai-burial no jutsu* took centre stage again, and this time, she went even more overboard. With my head buried deep in between her two pillows, she slid my head up and down between them while panting heavily.

"My son... my son... Aaaaahhh... My son... I finally get to see my son. My son hasn't been by my side in a long time... You... you should be by Mommy's side

this month... Mommy can't take it anymore... Mommy can't hold it in... Mommy just can't hold it in anymore... Mommy must be by your side. Mommy must breathe in your smell and feel your warmth... Let Mommy hug you. Let Mommy kiss you!"

'You're going way overboard Mom! Way overboard! I'm dying! I'm suffocating!! I'm suffocating! Your flower-scent is too prominent! No! No! Don't do this!'

I heard the quick footsteps of a guard outside. It looks like he's in quite the hurry, too. Perhaps it's because I went missing. Just as I was about to shout out, Mom quickly sealed my lips with a kiss, stopping me from making any sound.

She wrapped her tongue around mine and then tried to bite my tongue.

A string of saliva hung between us. I didn't dare to scream, but I didn't want to continue like this, either. God knows what Mom is going to do next.

If it were Elizabeth, I would trust that she wouldn't do anything. Vyvyan, however, is too unpredictable!

'This is too freaking scary!! If Mom pushes me down here, how am I going to face Lucia and Nier?!'

'Wait. If she goes that far with me here, the second war for me will probably start soon...'

Mom removed her lips from mine and then leaned in to kiss my neck.

I could feel her sharp teeth stab into my skin. A powerless feeling, from having my blood sucked, surged up inside me. My legs went numb, and I could feel them wanting to wobble.

Mom hugged me to help me keep my balance but her lips were plastered to my neck like she was trying to desperately suck my blood out.

'As far as I'm currently aware, dark elves are the only bloodsucking elves! Is Mom a dark elf?!"

I was so frightened my entire body went floppy.

'I thought Mera was the last dark elf, but I now suspect the Galadriel tribe is a tribe of dark elves! Mom's mana increases exponentially on full moon nights,

her eyes turn blood-red and she has a desire to suck my blood. Plus, the Galadriel tribe deliberately tried to slaughter all the dark elves!

'They used their blood to continue to increase their tribe's mana, by passing it on to their descendants, and alas, they managed to raise a monster with mana purity at almost one-hundred percent, Vyvyan! If that's true, how scary is the Galadriel tribe? How dark is the background of the glorious elven imperial family?'

'Wait, no!'

Not only did Mom suck out my blood, but she was now sending blood back into my body!

I could feel my entire body fill up like a balloon. I was feeling a little weak, but it feels like my energy has returned to my body. I always thought that I couldn't recover because I was tired from my journey and caught a cold, but that doesn't seem to be the case now. It must've been a mana issue in my blood.

A moment later, Mom raised her head up. Her blood-red eyes had reverted back to their normal blue.

She cupped my partially numb face and in a concerned voice explained, "Son, how is your body feeling? Son, has your body recovered a little? Your mana has always been running berserk in your body until now, but the effect wasn't major since you expended an excessive amount of mana. The mana in your body was continuously fluctuating, so the mana in Mommy's body kept on fluctuating, too. Mommy just filtered your blood, once again. You shouldn't have any problems now."

I touched my forehead. I kept feeling a little dizzy before, but I was completely fine now. I looked at her blankly and in a somewhat hazy manner asked, "Mom, why... why... why does it affect you?"

"Because you are Mommy's son. The mana in your body is forever linked with Mommy's. So if you ever have any problems, Mommy can feel it right away." Mom hugged me tightly, laughed softly and continued, "You're my son. You'll always be Mommy's son. Your link with Mommy will never disappear. Mommy will always be by your side... Mommy can't be without you. If Mommy can't feel your breaths, Mommy will lose control..."

'Uhm. I can tell. But Mom, please make sure to adjust your clothing when engaging in such sensual activities. And please remove your leg that's gently rubbing up against mine!'

"Mom. Sorry. I haven't been back in a long time..."

"Don't come back..." Mom hugged my head and gently continued, "Before your body completely recovers, you must not approach our lands. You must not. The mana in your body just won't settle down. If it goes berserk, it will cause your body to explode. Do not approach the elven lands."

"Mommy will be by your side. Mommy will be by your side. Mommy will never leave. Don't be scared. Don't be scared. But promise Mommy. No matter what happens, do not use magic again. You absolutely mustn't. Do not use magic again. You can't control the power and amount. You will kill yourself like that! You really will kill yourself!"

"I... I know..." I looked into Mom's eyes and kissed her gently on the forehead.

Mom giggled softly. She then frowned and said, "Every time you say that you end up making Mommy worry. You never listen to Mommy. Rely on Mommy more..."

"If I do that... I will not be able to establish myself here, will I?"

"That doesn't matter, Son. Mommy won't interfere with your business. Mommy will provide you with enough support, too. However, you must promise Mommy that you will come to see Mommy every day... Otherwise... Mommy will come to find you at night..."

'Don't! Don't scare me! Don't scare me like this!! Man, that's freaking scary!! What are you going to do at night?! What are you doing to do at night?! Can you beat Nier in a fight?! No! You can! Crap! Don't come! Do not come!'

Ch. 16

The atmosphere at tonight's family dinner was extremely awkward.

'Their relationship has always been bad... no, that's not quite right. Their relationship isn't bad, it is at 'either you die or I die, we're not going to be breathing the same air' level... Ah... well, not that resolute either.'

'Sorry, sorry. Please allow me to rephrase that. Here's a better description; the two, no... The four, which were seated together at dinner, were friendly and close to each other until it comes to a particular topic. At which point they will not hesitate to draw their blades and cut each other.'

I sat at the master-seat. On my left-hand side were Elizabeth and Nier. On my right-hand side were Vyvyan and Lucia.

Food was currently laid out in front of them. However, on one side were human dishes, while on the other, were elven.

When I looked at the food, I felt that the elven dishes looked sumptuous and suited to my palate. Most of the human dishes were simple dishes.

But the food in front of me right now, in other words, the dishes on two sides... were dishes prepared by Lucia and Nier today...

Wait, no. Lucia's wasn't even made by her! I'm absolutely positive Mom made them. I can recognise her dishes with a single glance. Lucia doesn't know how to cook!

Honestly, the two of them really caught me by surprise. I always thought the reverse.

Nier should be the one who can't cook, yet she is surprisingly a good cook. On the other hand, Lucia can't cook at all. I could tell by the way Lucia held a kitchen knife.

While I'm at it let me remind you. Please do not hold a kitchen knife like a sabre. The two of them are very different things.

The atmosphere on both sides was extremely awkward. While both of my moms were cutting their food up with smiles, they were just temporarily not violent.

Lucia and Nier, on the other hand, were very hostile to each other.

Nier gently placed her fork and knife down and then asked, "Your Majesty, how do the dishes I prepared for you taste?"

I nodded and replied, "They're very good."

"It's just that the elven dishes are so poor that it must have downgraded your experience tonight. I apologise for that. I wasn't able to stop that elf, who doesn't know how to cook at all." Nier shot a glare at Lucia.

Lucia angrily placed her fork and knife down. She looked at Nier and rebuffed, "Humanity's dishes are just as poor. You've only got those few dishes. They're so simple that they're a laughing matter. Elven dishes suit His Highness' palate better. Eating such crude and bad food will harm his stomach."

"But these dishes weren't even made by you. I really wonder how you're going to fulfil your duties as a wife when you can't even cook for your husband. Fortunately, I'm His Majesty's favourite wife. Otherwise, His Majesty would starve with you."

"What are you acting so stuck up for? You're just a bodyguard. You can't always be by His Highness' side. Fufu, I saw your laughable uniform today."

"I can cheerfully hug His Highness's arm when I'm with him, but you're just a mere bodyguard. You don't even have the right to get close to His Highness!"

Nier clenched her teeth angrily.

Lucia was right about that.

Nier still wasn't officially my wife, so her public identity was still my bodyguard. As such, Nier must maintain formality by my side, as she did in the past.

Lucia's public identity, on the other hand, was my soon-to-be elven wife, so she could wrap her arm around mine and cheerfully skip through the streets.

I really want to know how Nier feels when she watches Lucia wrap her arm

around mine and walk around all giddily. But it looks like I won't get a chance to know. I'll be sleeping with Lucia tonight because I haven't seen her in a while. At the same time, I'll take it as a chance to take a break.

God knows how Nier is going to relieve herself tonight. But it has nothing to do with me!

Nier couldn't argue with Lucia's remark. She gritted her teeth and then asked the empress next to her, "Your Majesty, my wedding with His Majesty..."

Mommy Elizabeth sliced a piece of meat and answered with a smile, "There's no need to rush, Nier. Soon. However, I don't know if my son wants to marry you. That will be all on him."

"What?!" Nier was frightened to the point she almost stood up.

I quickly waved my hand and said, "Nier, relax. I never said I wouldn't marry you. It's just that I don't have time to get married right now because of the current circumstances... you understand, don't you? It seems that the residents here still question the power of royalty. If we get married now, I won't have any energy to deal with the matters here. Don't worry, Nier. I will never abandon you or Lucia. Don't worry."

Nier nodded. Though she was somewhat reluctant to accept it, Nier would now not question my decision.

Vyvyan placed a pie into her mouth and then asked, "Son, do you have any problems with this domain? Is it related to the scene we saw when we arrived today?"

"Uhm." I nodded and then explained the entire problem from beginning to end.

After I had wrapped up my explanation, Mommy Elizabeth raised her cup of wine and pursed her lips into a smile.

"That Freya sure is interesting. I must say, she's no less than Castell in terms of intelligence, and she's younger, too. I think Freya will do well. As long as she is loyal, I won't have to worry about your policies." she said.

"Except, your business is dark as can be." Vyvyan smiled mischievously and

then continued, “I must say Elizabeth, it appears that your rule isn’t anything good for your people. You established such a large empire, yet your ministers and people don’t seem to care about the prosperity of your empire. Are you positive your officials are loyal?”

“Have they got anything to do with me?” Elizabeth waved her hand with annoyance and continued, “Of course, your little nation, that has hardly any inhabitants, has simple folk. Your prestige as a demigod can rule over that teeny-weeny territory of yours, but my empire is far too vast. I don’t have the spare energy to manage everything in my empire. I don’t care how the money came to be. I just care if there is enough or not. I can have as many people as I please, isn’t that right?”

I frankly don’t really agree with that way of evaluating the worth of things. As the saying goes, the slums are an empire’s grave. Empires are always destroyed by the sea of people. But the Rosvenor Empire is at its peak right now. The people living on the frontier and suffering can’t cause any trouble at the moment.

Further, I believe that the empress’s army can easily subdue a rebellion.

However, even Vyvyan has declined to comment. She smiled, raised up her cup of wine and said, “Son, what are you going to do, then? You have only solved some of the problems. However, the fundamental problem still stands. So how do you intend to resolve it?”

“I don’t have any plan either. I don’t know what to say before I see the land... If it really won’t work then, I plan to transform this city. If it can’t sustain itself through agriculture, I plan to sustain this city with industrial products and business. There is food from the south and the elven lands as well. I believe that we can import food through business.”

“That will work.” Elizabeth placed her cup of wine down and continued, “If that’s the only option, you can buy food from me, Son. I will get Castell’s company to deliver the food to you. You can decide on the price. I don’t want interest from you or anything. I can even send you food for free.”

“The same goes for us elves. If you need food, just let Mommy know, and Mommy will organise a team to deliver the food to you. However, we elves

don't produce food, so we will have to charge you a bit." Vyvyan looked at me with a smile. She then squinted and added, "Of course, if you really need food, I can create a spell to deliver things to you. That way, supplies can be delivered without the expense of any food."

"Those elven tricks are so annoying."

"You humans don't lack so-called tricks, either."

My two moms exchanged glances and smiled. My two moms' relationship in the past was way better than my two wives relationship...

Ch. 17

"Goodness gracious. Making me, an elf, cross mountains and rivers and go through such cold places. You really make things hard for people, Your Majesty. If it weren't for your big sis, me, being strong-willed, I would've turned around and went home halfway here. So, let sis warm up with your just-come-of-age male body... I was joking. I was just joking..." The red-haired lady waved her hand as she chuckled. She spoke while watching Nier and Lucia, looking alerted, behind me.

I smiled helplessly as I looked at my red-haired big sis and said, "It's been hard on you. I have prepared your room for you. You can rest there for a few days and then go to check out your workplace."

"I don't mind. I heard Vyvyan and Elizabeth are both here. How rare for the two of them to be able to be together and get along. I want to go and see the two of them."

My red-haired sister scratched her head. Her eyes hinted that she was looking forward to seeing some banter.

'It looks like she's really eager to see her two students meeting again. No, her gaze was the 'looking forward to seeing a show' type of gaze. I'm guessing she wants to see Elizabeth and Vyvyan fight.'

Elizabeth knocked on the door.

She came in, made a small bow and said to her, "You need not make the long trip, teacher. I heard that you had arrived, as well. How could I make you go out of your way to come and look for me, teacher?"

Vyvyan followed behind Elizabeth. She bowed to my red-haired sister and then revealed a smile, "Long time no see, teacher. Have you adapted to life in humanity's lands?"

I could sense the two standing behind me freeze in place.

'I guess it's because the two of them never imagined this somewhat messy red-haired lady was the teacher of the two scariest women on the continent. Not to mention the amount of respect they showed her and the way they spoke.'

The red-haired lady was stronger than one could possibly imagine. According to what I've heard, this red-haired lady in front of me is the true number one sword saint. Elizabeth is an entire level below.

The red-haired lady smiled and walked over to stand between them. She patted the two of them on their shoulders firmly and said with a smile, "My, my, how nice, how nice. I finally get to see you two standing together again. I thought you two would never stand together again since you two went on a crazy rampage back then. Vyvyan, you sure are vicious. You knew that Elizabeth has no miraculous ways of healing and yet you still went and left a scar on her chest."

Vyvyan smiled helplessly and then replied, "There are no such things as 'too severe' or 'too light' on the battlefield. Elizabeth did not pull any punches with me either at the time. She stabbed me without any hesitation!"

"Would that have happened if you had just obediently returned my son to me?!"

"He's my son! Why should I give him to you?! He grew up in my body, and I brought him into this world! He fed on my breast milk and was raised by me alone, yet you dare try to snatch him from me?! What right do you have to snatch my son away?!"

The gunpowder in them surged up.

It was just as I said, the two of them are very friendly under normal circumstances. But, as soon as it comes to me, they immediately turn on each other. They completely forget their old friendship. That was their bottom line that was off-limits.

"Alright, enough you two. What are you arguing in front of your child about? You're not fighting for Inard right now. My, my, it's a pity that Inard isn't here. While His Highness did some very strange things back then, he was all-in-all a wise ruler." The red-haired lady laughed and wrapped it up.

She hugged her two students and looked at Elizabeth. With a nostalgic smile, she added, "I think the most correct choice he made was also his craziest choice, and that was to take you in, Elizabeth. But it looks like it wasn't all that bad, after all, now."

My two moms lowered their heads. Both of them fell silent when my father was mentioned. I initially thought the two of them had gotten over his death, but that doesn't look to be the case, now.

There's a particularly strange and sad feeling when a few people meet, but one is missing.

Please forgive me for being blunt, but I don't miss this Inard nor do I have any feelings for him. Actually, no. I don't think that applies to just me. Even the original Troy doesn't have any feelings for his father. Maybe it's because his father passed away before he could remember. All of his memories must be of his mother.

"All right, all right, let's not talk about that punk who makes people sad anymore. Look at your child. Hmm, I must say, Vyvyan, Elizabeth, your child, in other words; Troy, really is an outstanding individual."

The red-haired lady broke the gloomy silence. She looked at me and proudly said, "My, my, I was planning to live an easy life, but I ended up getting called on by your son. Good grief. Good grief. I used to work for Galadriel and Rosvenor's daughters, and now I'm working for their son. Good grief. Good grief. I must be bound."

"This does not count as 'working' for me, right...? I asked for your help..."

'I think what you're saying is getting stranger and stranger, too, sis! What do you mean I'm Vyvyan and Elizabeth's son? Yes, it would certainly be a most beautiful scene for my two moms to be intimate in a sensual way. The unfortunate problem is they can't give birth like that! How could I be the child of the two of them?!"

Vyvyan proudly puffed her chest up and boasted, "That's a given! He's my child after all! He's inherited the Galadriel bloodline, was raised by me and is my son that I am most proud of. He's the most perfect man in this world, right now! Not even Onii-sama can compare to my son!"

"Of course! My son can't be a pet after all. Look at how he exudes the aura of a king when he handles matters, now. What I am most proud of is not some military accomplishment or how vast my territory is, but that I gave birth to such an outstanding descendant!" Elizabeth looked at me with tenderness and love.

However, it wasn't the type of love for your lover but the deepest form of motherly love for your child. Her motherly love was so bright I virtually couldn't open my eyes.

'Please, mom and mom. Please stop saying that... I'm about to be spoilt to death by you two... I've only just started out. I'm nowhere near as amazing as you make me out to be...'

"This is good. This is good. You're both here. Come, come, come. I have time tonight and you two are finally both present, so drink with me. My, my, it was so nice gazing at the moon while drinking under it in the snow, back then. It would be great if we could do that again on the full-moon night this month."

"I can't. I must stay by my son's side on the full-moon night this month."

"I can't leave my son's life in this woman's hands!"

"What?! You want me to leave him in your care? How many times has he returned from death while under your watch?! I can't believe you can still say that!"

"Do you have the right to blame me?! My son got the scar on his chest when he was with you! You keep saying that you protect my son well, but what have

you done?! You don't have what it takes to protect your own child as a mother!"

"You humans were the ones that came up with that plan!"

"You elves were the ones who carried it out!"

The red-haired lady watched the two of them argue. She sighed and then scratched her head. She then looked at me and asked, "Are we... going to just leave the two of them like this..."

I made a helpless open hand gesture and replied, "It makes no difference. They fight once every day. It's become an everyday thing already. I'm no longer surprised."

"Sigh, Your Majesty, it sure is rough on you..."

I wish I could cry but I had no tears, "Yeah... super rough..."

Ch. 18

"My plan for the workers at the factory is to split them into two shifts."

"We've just started operating, so we don't need to operate for twenty-four hours per day, however; someone on night-watch must go on patrol duty every hour. That person must watch out for fires. I'll write an order. You pass it on."

"Roger."

I wrote the order with lively and vigorous strokes and signed my name. I then stamped it with the seal and handed it to the messenger. The messenger made a small bow and then left my office.

Freya immediately came in after he left, handed me a document folder and reported, "Onii-sama, this is our temporary shift-allocations for the maids, as well as the name-list. Please check it. If there is no problem with it, please sign your name and it will take effect tomorrow."

"Let me take a look." I took the document and checked the names inside.

“Why are there now three personal servants?” I asked.

“Because as you are now the lord of a city, the duties as a personal servant have also increased. Miss Luna will be far too busy and tired if she is the only one. As such, I have added two more personal servants for Miss Luna’s sake. The two of them are Her Majesty’s personal maids. They are loyal and definitely good.”

“Forget it. Luna alone is good enough.” I scribbled out the two names and then elaborated, “Luna won’t be happy. I don’t really need a personal servant, either. If I can do it myself, I’ll do it myself.”

“Alright.” Freya won’t control my business excessively, which is a good thing.

I signed my name and then returned the document to her. I then asked, “Oh right. Freya, what else is on the schedule for today?”

“You will soon have to go and see the nobles and business representatives of this region. The factory has begun operations as well. You best go and take a look. Your personal guard unit’s training will also soon begin, so you had better boost their morale. In the evening, you have the banquet with the nobles and business representatives invited. You then need to take a look at the city defence plan designed today.”

“Alright.” I nodded and then picked up the cup of tea by the side for a drink. I shook out my cape and said, “Call Nier. I’ll prepare to go and see the nobles and business representatives. Freya, ask them to wait for me in the guest hall. I’ll be there right away.”

“Understood.” Freya made a small bow. She then looked at me and said, “Onii-sama. There has been a lot of work lately, so please take care of your health. After all, if you fall sick then you will do more harm than good. Also, the next full moon is right around the corner. I hope that you can look after your health.”

“Mom is here, this time, so there won’t be a problem.” I opened the door and turned to stroke Freya’s head. With a smile, I said, “You too, Freya. You must be more tired than me. You have to look after yourself, too. Don’t exhaust yourself. Ah, is there anything you want to eat? I’m going to go and see the merchants. I’ll buy you something.”

“Preserved cherry tomatoes!”

Freya revealed an excited smile like that of a child.

I watched her speak with eagerness. However, she then hid her excited smile in the next moment and swapped it for a mature and steady smile. She said, “However... if you are too busy, Onii-sama, do not worry about it. Further, preserved sweet cherry tomatoes are not cheap...”

“Preserved cherry tomatoes? Got it.” I nodded.

Next will be the meeting with just Nier and me.

Luna and Freya had to go and watch over the training of the new maids. Those girls from agriculture families had no experience with the work of maids, and the duties of maids are honestly not easy. It’s not as though just anybody can handle them. They need to undergo training now, which Luna and Freya will arrange.

There are thousands of things waiting to be done in the palace right now. I don’t intend to make my moms’ people handle everything.

Mom was planning to leave the people she brought along with me.

But I feel that they’re loyal to Mom, not me. Since this is my palace, they must be my people. Further, if the land is good, then this place is fantastic for work.

Once we’ve solved the issue with the land, I need to deal with their urgent matters before winter comes and they can’t get through it.

“Your Majesty.” Nier walked up to my side, pressed her hand on her sword-handle with a smile and then held my hand. She looked at the frown on my face and said, “Your Majesty, you pulled an all-nighter again last night, didn’t you? I said to leave the documents for the next day if there are too many. Can’t you do that? ... Lucia is responsible, too... she doesn’t let you rest at all.”

“You wouldn’t let me rest, either if it was you...” I smiled and kissed Nier’s forehead. I adjusted my expression and said, “Let’s go, Nier. I’m alright. I’ll have a good rest afterwards. Let’s go and see our guests, now.”

“Alright.” Nier put on her expressionless look.

We went through the corridor that wrapped around the courtyard and

walked to the guest hall ahead.

Honestly, I do indeed have a lot of work. I don't have any work experience. I need to check their population numbers and placements since this place is a collection of lots of people from villages and towns.

I also have to check the situation of the towns and villages previously, not to mention all sorts of other reports. The city has just started to move so I need to deal with the things of the past and organise new jobs.

I don't feel tired, though. I actually feel this is new, and I have a sense of duty like I'm on a mission. I feel happy and satisfied to be able to do work that I enjoy. I don't feel tired. Instead, this satisfying feeling is spurring me on to work harder.

In the courtyard, Elizabeth placed her teacup down with concern. She watched her son's silhouette quickly pass by.

She sighed, placed her chin on her hand and said, "I'm so worried watching him work so earnestly... He's just a child and yet he has so much work. My silly son doesn't delegate work, either... His body can't handle this if he keeps it up."

"Isn't it you humans' fault? You humans have to bother with every little detail. If we were in our elven lands, I would just do everything. What are you even testing? Do you not know that my son is the best?" Vyvyan looked at her with a slightly angry look and grumbled, "My son's health has just stabilised. He won't last if he continues this way."

"I must let him rest then... hmm... let me see... what sort of places can he take a break nearby... We can't go hunting, right now... He doesn't like sword fighting either... Ah... drinking? Yeah, drinking will work! I need to go and find some wine! I'm going to get someone to bring my treasured wine from the royal capital here!"

"Is there nothing else other than barbaric activities and alcohol inside that messy, fried brain of yours?" Vyvyan glared at her.

She slammed her hand on the table and firmly asked, "Can't he go to a hot spring?! My son can't go to hot springs in the elven lands at the moment, but can't he go to your hot springs, either?! Hot springs are the best way to relieve

fatigue! If you don't even have hot water, what are you doing constructing a city?!"

"Don't you elves bathe in lakes and rivers?"

"That's why I want a hot spring. A hot spring is best for my son to relax."

"Unfortunately, there are none close by." Frustrated, Vyvyan rolled her eyes. Her eyes almost rolled back into her head. She sighed and then demanded, "My goodness... Find me a vacant block of land, and there will be a hot spring by tonight!!"

Ch. 19

"I will be counting on all of you then."

I signed my name and stamped the letter with my seal. I then handed it to the representative of the merchants and nobles.

"Food is hard to find in winter, plus we don't have reserves prepared in the city this year. Do not hoard food causing the prices to soar. Of course, you will benefit from it, as well. I will compensate for eighty-percent of the food you currently have, according to volume, as long as you are willing to lower your prices. As nobles, you definitely have provisions stored at home. We will buy it from you at 150% of what their current worth is."

"Alright, Your Majesty. We will definitely see that it is done."

We were basically done with pricing discussions. Now the city won't fall into starvation due to food and fuel shortages.

I can't create a state-owned commercial and industrial system, yet. If these merchants possess provisions, they'll definitely raise the price of food. Distributing money to the people wouldn't allow them to keep up with the speed at which they raise their prices, either.

Hence, I negotiated price points which we could all accept. The food reserve

the city needs will have to be purchased from these nobles.

Freya is as reliable as ever. She even considered this. Is food worth money? No, it is not. However, prices increase once you add the cost of transportation into the equation. But this group of merchants have shown enough sincerity in doing business with the royal family, and as a result, it didn't cost much.

After the discussions ended, the representatives of the merchants and nobles stood up.

One of the nobles looked at me with a smile and said, "I am very glad to be able to do business with the royal family. I must say, you are very thoughtful and attentive, Your Majesty."

I waved my hands as I smiled and replied, "Not really. Being at the post, one will worry about any matter concerned therewith. I am still a far cry away, compared to Her Majesty. I will surely require your help with many other things in future because I have just come here and still have many things that I am ignorant of. So I will be counting on all of you."

A merchant said, "You need not say so, Your Majesty. We are nobles of the empire. Being able to be of service to you is our honour. Further, we are very happy to be able to do business with you. You speak with fairness and intelligence. If possible, we hope that we can do more business with you."

"Yeah? That's great then. Money which isn't circulating around is dead money. Whether or not this city will be able to thrive will depend on all of you. Don't leave tonight. I have prepared a banquet for you all. You're more than welcome to bring your lovers and guests over to enjoy it."

"We will definitely be there. Thank you for your invitation, Your Majesty."

"Alright! I won't see you out then."

"You do not need to see us out, Your Majesty. See you tonight."

"Uhm, see you tonight!"

There was a group of guards organised to send the group on their way.

I sat on a chair to the side and caught my breath.

Nier looked at me with concern from behind and said, "Your Majesty, have a

short rest. I think you should delay the work for the afternoon. It's fine for you to have a short break. Though they say one can be so diligent with work that they forget to eat and sleep, if something happens to you, then nothing good will come out of it."

"I'll be alright, Nier. I've just recovered, so I'm still feeling a little weak is all. It's not so bad that I need to rest. There's nothing much to do in the afternoon, anyway. I just need to make a trip to the factory and then to check on my personal guards."

"Your Majesty, my heart aches for you seeing you so tired..." Nier frowned and then said, "You must eat a proper lunch, no matter what. Head over to the dining hall first. I will go and cook for you today... You'll definitely get sick if your nutrition is poor."

"Alright." I nodded. I then stood up and walked out of the place with Nier. I took in a deep breath, and the cold air woke my somewhat foggy mind, a little.

I bade Nier goodbye, then walked to the dining hall.

After making a turn, I ran into Lucia, who was walking quickly. She looked a little angry, as though she was looking for something.

"Lucia!"

When I called out to her she turned to look at me and then ran over. However, she had anger in her eyes.

I paused, going through my memories to see if I did anything that I should be sorry to her about in the last twenty-four hours...

After I had held her last night, petite Lucia curled up into a little ball and fell asleep. I soon woke up after a short respite to go over documents.

It doesn't seem like I did anything I should be sorry about to her...

"Your Highness! You're a little too much! You left without saying a word in the morning! You didn't even call for me today!" Lucia stood with her arms akimbo and looked at me angrily. She angrily complained, "I was so worried about you, yet you don't even care about me! I wanted to stroll around with you, yet you left without a word! You didn't even leave a written message! I looked for you

all morning!"

"Sorry, sorry!" I pressed down on Lucia's shoulders with a smile and said, "Sorry, Lucia. I've just arrived here. I have too much work so I don't have time to take you out for a stroll. If you want to go out to play, you can go with Luna as long as you put in a word first."

"I don't want to go out if it's not with you!" Lucia stamped her feet and then looked at me with suspicion and said, "Your Highness, how busy are you? If there are lots of jobs, can't you just get Her Highness to handle some of it? It's not embarrassing for you to delegate work if you can't handle it all."

I smiled helplessly and replied, "Lucia, it's different. This is my domain. Her Highness, and Her Majesty, are just guests here. I can't have guests working for me, as the owner. It's alright, Lucia. I think I'll be done soon. It's mainly because there are lots of things to attend to when establishing a new city. Once it officially begins to take off, things will be fine."

Lucia grumbled, "Your Highness! Don't you lie to me! I'm not ignorant! Her Highness is busy the entire day, too, even though the elven kingdom is stable! I don't think your jobs will decrease in the future. Your Highness, if you are so busy, when will you have time to get married to me?"

"Soon. Soon. Lucia, don't worry. I don't have any thoughts about getting married in this freezing winter, either... I think... we should get married when the weather gets warmer, all right? Even if I'm busier then, I'll still hold our wedding. You and Nier are more important than this city, to me, so I won't give you two the cold shoulder for the sake of work. I was in the wrong this morning. That won't happen again."

"If that Nier wasn't mentioned, what you said would've been more beautiful..." Lucia blushed a little and proudly puffed her chest while maintaining her akimbo posture.

She said, "It's alright! Your Highness! I've already waited for over ten years, so I don't mind waiting another month. You don't have to worry about me too much, Your Highness. Go and do what you enjoy... other than seducing other women, that is. If another flirty girl appears by your side, I'll definitely kill her..." Her coldest voice told me she wasn't joking.

It looks like Lucia is still feeling very angry and wronged after failing to defeat Nier last time. She was not going to let that happen. Does this mean that I'll have to strictly choose from the Valkyries if I want to start a harem?

If I did, Lucia wouldn't even need to bother, because Nier would stomp her...

'Goodbye, my harem life... But two moms and two wives are enough...'

'Wait... why did I count my moms, too...?'

"I'm going to stick with you for your work in the afternoon. I'm your wife, so I naturally have to work with you!" Lucia patted her chest. She looked at me with her small face full of pride and exclaimed, "Watch me, Your Highness! I'm a superb assistant!"

"Yeah...?"

Sorry...

But I, uhh...

Honestly don't have much faith there...

Ch. 20

While the snow on the roads wasn't so deep, there was a lot of snow in the fields.

Freya and I dismounted to walk into the fields. We used our hands to remove the layers of snow, revealing black soil underneath.

'This is very rarely seen black soil. I've only seen it in Northeast China. Logically speaking, this black soil should be a natural occurrence. The reason the people in the Northeast produce food is precisely because they have land with black soil. Plant anything there and it'll grow.'

'Of course, perhaps my common sense there doesn't apply here since this is a different world, which is why I can't be certain. This might be a sign that the land is poor for all I know.'

I grabbed a handful of soil. The ice-cold soil slid through my hand.

Freya watched me from my side and then asked, “Have you figured out something, Onii-sama?”

“No, nothing...”

I shook my head with a helpless smile. This has got nothing to do with my major. I’ve never farmed. I don’t even know if this land is good or not if you asked me.

“Your Highness, if you can’t figure anything out, let’s head back... this place is freezing...”

Lucia sat atop the horse with her arms folded as she shivered. She was probably ready to glue her entire body to the horse to warm up.

The temperature isn’t actually that low, but it seems elves really can’t stand the cold. But why does it feel like Lucia is flirting...? If you really can’t stand the cold like this, how did you survive in the north of the elven lands?

I picked up a small spade, dug up two holes and put the soil into two flowerpots we had brought along.

I then said, “After we get back, I’ll let Nier and Lucia grow flowers. I want to know if it’s the land that is poor, or something else... I’ve heard that food doesn’t grow well in certain soils but I have never heard that it was a problem for other stuff... I need to think about this properly.”

“Uhm, there is no need to plant anything right now, in winter. We just need to find out what the problem is before sowing seeds.” Freya stood next to me and walked up to the horses on the side. She said, “We need to go and check out the factory next, right? ... Ah, I really look forward to seeing it since I designed it.”

While humans currently have a concept of concentration of production, they don’t have a complete factory. This is the first factory.’

This sort of out-dated production method requires time and manpower. Steam-engines? We don’t have them here. But it looks like somebody is thinking of it.’

'Human society is currently facing a type of change, and that is the contradiction between the production methods and what they want in terms of goods.'

'Perhaps a machine will appear soon... I can't say for certain if it'll be a steam engine, since this world and my world are different in certain ways.'

'The current factory doesn't really match the description of a factory; a factory needs to rely on machines for production. The current machines there are large water-powered machines. The main bulk of the work still relies on manpower. However, I designed an assembly line production system to significantly increase production rates and speeds.'

Lucia didn't seem interested in the factory.

We rode to the factory by the edge of the city walls. It was right next to the river, so the metal hole-punching machines and presses were water operated. The ammunition couldn't compare to the standard in the modern day... Of course, I wasn't trying to create modern bullets.

After discussing it with Lorana, we decided that we would make rounds like shotgun shells, except that we're changing the end of the bullets to a rounded shape.

After combining black powder with smokeless gunpowder and setting the ratios, we can create metal bullets despite them being simple.

'The factory is still very new.' We went into the factory, and the guards made way. 'There are two departments in the factory. One department handles ammunition production, while the other manages gun production... Ideally, there would be two separate factories, but I don't have any other space right now...'

The factory needed to be next to the river since the water-powered machines needed to be within its vicinity.

We saw Lorana as soon as we arrived at the factory entrance. She was holding a long gun in her hand and measuring something.

When she saw us, she placed the gun down with a smile and greeted us, "Hey, you're here."

"Uhm. We came to take a look." I walked over and looked at the weapon she held.

This is a Spencer rifle. Lorana had already made a gun like it and it doesn't look bad. Seeing this ancient weapon be revived in my hands didn't feel too bad.

She looked at me with satisfaction as I fiddled with the gun and said, "The design for this rifle sure is unique. I've thought about repeat firing rifles, but my concept failed. Your designs are better, after all, Your Majesty."

I smiled helplessly.

This doesn't prove anything.

The difficulty of replicating something versus inventing something is completely different. I just recreated a gun that I know of, and while I had blueprints she was inventing on her own.

I admire her production skills more than my own.

"The factory isn't in complete operation yet. We are still learning how to operate some machines. Once we learn how to use them we will begin full-scale production, which should be around spring." Lorana looked at the factory behind her with a sense of pride and continued, "This is the first time I've seen this sort of production method. Everyone is responsible for an individual part, which is then assembled together. This is truly a simple and pragmatic method. Plus, there are so many people here working on producing them. If they could be replaced with machines, I presume the production rate would be even higher."

"That's the point of a factory. If we had machines, the factory could continue to produce the needed goods without end." I nodded. I then looked at the rifle in her hand and said, "We need to hurry and produce guns and ammunition. I don't ask that everyone in the militia has a gun., Though, but I at least want to ensure that all of my personal guards have a rifle each, as well as the weapons and bullets they use for practice."

"That won't be a problem." Lorana nodded.

She then stretched out her back and said, "This is truly an interesting place. If

I could have more machines, how powerful would this place be? This must be humanity's strongest place."

I looked up at the tall and sturdy building. In a serious tone, I said, "This place will definitely become so. It definitely will."

By the time we finished checking out the factory, it had started to get dark already.

'It looks like my business for today has come to an end. I now need to head back and join the banquet.'

I rode to the palace and returned to my room to get changed.

"Ah, Your Majesty, you are back."

Luna welcomed me with a bright smile. She took my cape and then said, "Miss Nier has not returned from the camp yet. Your Majesty, you need to prepare for the banquet that is starting right away. Your clothes have been prepared. Let me help you get changed."

"Ah, all right..."

I took off my clothes I wore out, sighed, and then picked up the clothes on the bed.

Luna lingered behind me and then hugged me from the back.

I was caught by surprise, "Luna?!"

"It's nothing. It's nothing... it is just... just... I feel that you are too tired... Your Majesty... you look very tired... very worn-out. Your Majesty... have a break for now... seeing you so tired, all of our hearts ache for you..."

From behind, Luna softly uttered, "Do not force yourself. Do not force yourself, Your Majesty... if you are tired... just say it."

"I know. I know." I touched Luna's hands on the front of my waist.

Luna giggled and then said, "Your Majesty, Her Majesty came before and invited you to go to the hot-springs tomorrow..."

"Wha-? Wha-?What?! What hot-spring?!"

'What sort of development is this?! Do we have hot-spring play here too?! So I

get to experience this one-hundred-percent fan-service-guaranteed plot?! And I get to bathe together with my moms in a justified way!

'I'm blessed! I'm excited!!'

Ch. 21

I looked at my map over and over several times.

'There was no hot-spring here yesterday. Yeah. I'm absolutely certain. Unless the person who drew the map was blind, there was definitely no hot-spring in sight, on the small hill near the city!'

I looked Vyvyan, who was by the side, playing with her hair while humming a tune.

I then looked at the bubbling hot-spring on this hill.

'My gut tells me that this person definitely had a part in this! It was definitely you! Vyvyan definitely used her magic to make this appear overnight! I'm absolutely certain that's what happened!'

Elizabeth came up behind me, pressed her hand on my shoulder and asked, "Do you want to warm up first, Son?"

"Alright. Luna..."

"You don't have to call for Luna. Mommy will help you wash..." Elizabeth dipped a sponge into the hot spring and then I felt a warm and moist sensation on my back. Elizabeth hugged me around my waist from behind and then slowly scrubbed my back...

'Don't! Don't scrub my front-side! I can scrub my front-side on my own! Don't glue yourself to me now! I'm getting squashed by you!'

Vyvyan shot a grumpy look this way. She then snorted and said, "What rough hand techniques. You'll damage my son's skin like that. You're as rough as ever. That's my son, not your sword!"

"Kyah?! Son... Son... how did you skin become so red...? Mommy... Mommy

didn't do it on purpose... does it hurt? Does it hurt? It's Mommy's fault. It's Mommy's fault... Mommy... Mommy can't control Mommy's strength properly..." Shocked, Elizabeth tossed the sponge in her hand away.

I let out a heavy sigh. My body isn't as tough as Mom's, Nier's or Lucia's. But I'm not so soft that a sponge could wound me. I'm not a porcelain doll. And that's a very rare heredity disease...

"... It's okay Mom. It's just because of the water." I cupped a handful of hot water and splashed it on my body before wiping it.

It honestly does feel great to dip yourself in a hot spring in the freezing winter. Except I can't shake off the feeling that it's a little weird to strip down outside.

The Valkyries had set up a simple screen.

'The empress can't bring her sword into the water, so the Valkyries kind of need to come out of their nest.'

There was a Valkyrie, with a drawn sword, on guard-duty every three to five steps. The elven shadow squad had spread out at the foot of the mountain, as well.

If you wanted to assassinate the ruler of this continent right now, I imagine you'd need to bring an army.

Nier looked over this way and shyly stripped. She softly said, "My body... Your Majesty... you already know... that I have lots of scars... and muscles... it doesn't look good..."

"It's fine." I looked at Nier and shook my head. I chuckled and praised her, "I really like you, Nier, both your body and your soul, so don't mind it. The scars on your body are a symbol of honour. They are scars of glory. They're not something you should hide. Plus, your body is very nice, Nier."

"Your Majesty!" Nier jumped into the water blissfully and swam over to my side. She hugged my arm as she snuggled up in my arms.

I let out a big sigh of relief and leaned on the stone wall.

Soaking in the hot water helped me sober up a little after feeling a little dizzy

from the drinking last night. The fatigue I had built up recently disappeared with the steam as well.

Lucia came from the other direction and hugged my arm. She then mocked Nier, "Hmph. Isn't that just fat? ... Elves are all about proportions and symmetrical bodies. A chest full of fat can't compare! What's the point of having them so big?! Cow-tits!"

Lucia's body is really nice, too. If you were to compare, her body is just as nice as Nier's. But Nier is quite a bit taller than Lucia, making Lucia look a lot smaller... in all places...

"Don't get jealous because you don't have them. Jealousy is a sin, you know? His Majesty particularly loves my body. Otherwise, we wouldn't go at it from night till dawn! On the other hand, sleeping with you must be like sleeping with his daughter, huh? How are you going to raise your child with His Majesty, when your body is so bad?" Nier didn't give her an inch.

'It looks like Nier has become more talkative after knowing Lucia.'

You must know that at the start, Nier wouldn't say much before getting into a sparring match with Lucia... a sparring match in name only, though. In reality, they would try to kill the other with wooden swords... Lucia... always gets beaten to the point where she would come to me, curl up in my arms and tremble.

"Cow-tits!"

"Better than a little kid!"

"What are you all chatting about?" My two moms from the other side entered the water and looked in our direction.

I looked at their bodies... and then Lucia's and Nier's...

'Hmm... it looks like... these two are just a level below... Who said elves had petite bodies?! I think Vyvyan's body is better than Elizabeth's! Elizabeth is slightly taller than Vyvyan, but she still loses to Vyvyan. It looks like Lucia's body is just normal...'

The two of them went silent... They had no right to flaunt their bodies in front

of my two moms.

"Aahh... it sure feels good... Vyvyan, your magic isn't useless after all." Elizabeth suavely stretched out her back and then sunk into the water.

Luna gently set down a plate of fruits and then said with a smile, "Please enj-, ahh!!"

Before she knew it, I had already pulled her down into the water. And in a moment of emergency, Luna grabbed Freya who was next to her.

The two girls shrieked and fell into the water together, creating a massive splash.

"Your Majesty!!"

"Onii-sama!!!"

The two girls found their footing in the water before they could calm down and then looked at me angrily.

I chuckled mischievously as I waved my hand and said, "Sorry, sorry. Don't be angry. Don't be angry. I just thought that you two could relax for a bit since you both do about the same amount of work as I usually do. Your clothes are wet now anyway, so how about relaxing in the hot spring? Today is the first day without any work, so have a good rest."

"But... but... It is okay for Miss Freya... but I..."

Luna looked at Lucia and Nier fearfully.

'Luna seems to always be really afraid of these two. I think their savagery when they dueled left a big shadow in Luna's heart... Perhaps she's afraid of being beaten to death by the two if they find out about her dark past...'

"It's okay..."

Lucia looked at her ears. She seemed to have a certain curiosity for them.

Nier looked at me, tenderly touched my chest and said, "His Majesty's orders."

"I... Alright then..."

Luna shyly took her clothes off in the water. Freya who was behind her also

undressed and then sunk into the water. They let out a big sigh of relief.

Hot springs really are a good thing... None of us spoke for a while. We could finally have a short respite and some peace, after being busy for so long.

Vyvyan closed her eyes and faced up to the sky in a daze.

Elizabeth held a cup of wine and accompanied it with a plate with fruits floating on the water.

Nier and Lucia hugged me left-and-right and kicked each other's legs every now and then.

Freya and Luna leaned on each other's shoulders and hummed in a relaxed fashion.

Why does this scene... feel oddly harmonious...?

Ch. 22

When I opened my eyes, I could only see a pitch-black sky.

'No, this isn't the sky. The sky wouldn't have a texture.'

This black and scaly texture pressed down on my body. Or rather, it should be some animal's claw that's pressed down on my body, legs, and face, leaving me without even a hint of light.

The ground around me felt like it was ablaze. I felt like the heat from the ground and strong smell of charcoal made the air thin.

The oxygen in the air was being depleted by the intense flames, while the thing pressing down on my head cut me off from my source of oxygen. I was on the verge of suffocating. I felt like the oxygen around me was wildly escaping me, not even leaving me with a single ounce.

I reached my hand out and tried to push the claws of the unknown animal in front of me away.

I don't know why I didn't fear it at all, despite it squashing me like this. Was it maybe because I knew this was a dream? Or was it because my subconscious

didn't recognise this animal as a threat?

I never thought the claw would feel so surprisingly soft. It was so soft I could manipulate it into any shape I liked. I couldn't resist the urge to massage and pinch it.

The claw seemed to get a little annoyed and budged. A clear voice from overhead then spoke out, "Son... you sure like taking the initiative..."

I immediately opened my eyes and faced Vyvyan's playful eyes.

Vyvyan scanned me with curiosity. She had a naughty smile on her face.

In my foggy-minded state, I think I managed to figure out what could give my hand such an odd and yet blissful feeling...

"Oop!" Just as I was about to shout, Vyvyan swiftly covered my mouth with her hand, preventing me from shouting.

I pulled my hand back as if I had been electrocuted and looked at her with terror.

I want to know where Nier and Lucia are. I remember we returned to the palace after leaving the hot-spring. The heat and humidity from the hot-spring left us in no mindset to want sleep, so for some odd reason, we stayed in my room.

We chatted away in the midst of dried meat and strong wine. After experiencing another losing battle at guarding my chastity, I fell asleep after being completely spent.

And we now come to the present...

I turned my head to the side to see Nier on my right sleeping completely in the nude. On my left was Lucia who was clinging to my left arm and deep asleep like an infant. On my leg was a black silhouette which I think was Elizabeth, who was sound asleep while snoring quietly. On the ground next to my bed were Luna and Freya's petite bodies deep asleep.

And as for Vyvyan... well, she was squashing me from above...

'No wonder why I had such a weird dream. Turns out this is why...' I slowly returned to reality from my nightmare and looked at Vyvyan like I was begging

her, hoping she'd get off me.

Honestly, I feel that I'm in dire straits right now because when we got high from drinking, Nier launched an attack, and then Lucia. I don't know if Vyvyan took part or not...

If Vyvyan did participate, I didn't recall rejecting her...

Whether or not Vyvyan got her way that night is a complete mystery. I never stopped trying to find out from her by testing her after that night.

The others all said they couldn't remember. Meanwhile, Mommy Vyvyan always wore a frightening smile that made me worry as she shook her head.

Though she denied it, her smile really didn't help to reassure me.

Vyvyan twisted her body. She then released her hand and said, "Son, did you have a dream? Did you see a burnt forest and a huge animal in your dream?"

I froze up at first, but then I remembered Mom's magic was mind reading, so it wasn't hard for her to know what my dream was.

I nodded and then replied, "Mom, does that mean something? Is the dream a prophecy or something?"

"No, Son." Vyvyan shook her head. She then looked into my eyes.

I noticed a tinge of nostalgia and sadness as she continued, "That wasn't foresight or an omen. To the contrary, it was an event in the past. That was Mommy's dream, just now. That is your father's memory."

"My father... Inard's memory? Isn't he dead? ... Didn't he die..."

"On the way to slay dragons." Vyvyan cut me off to answer the question first. She then continued uneasily, "Onii-sama transmitted this memory back. I'm not sure what this memory means. I don't know if Onii-sama died at that time or if he lived for much longer after. I also don't know what Onii-sama is trying to express through the dream. I was taking care of you, when you were still young, at the time so I didn't go there. Afterwards, I heard the news that Onii-sama had passed on."

I noticed Mom's blue eyes quiver. I lowered my head and softly said, "Sorry, Mom..."

"Silly child. It's not your fault."

Vyvyan stroked my face with a smile and then continued, "I think that Onii-sama was very frank and poised when he was faced with death. I don't know why Onii-sama transmitted the memory into my mind. Perhaps it was for me to locate the place? Or was it for you to locate that place?"

"Me?"

"Yes. This memory should be for you. However, since your mana is berserk, I received it in your place." Vyvyan looked at me as she continued, "Bloodlines are tied with mana. Family members related by blood can transmit feelings and memories to each other. That said, one requires a very high level of mana purity to be able to accomplish that feat. Normally speaking, only the Galadriel tribe, and a small number of magician families, can use it. Ah, Lucia can, too."

I looked at Mom and asked the question I wanted an answer to most, "Mom, are we related to dark elves...?"

"Son, we are dark elves." Vyvyan smiled helplessly as she looked at me and explained, "However, we are successful dark elves. Our Galadriel tribe is a tribe of successful dark elves. Through draining the mana of other elves, we were able to strengthen our mana. We would accumulate enough mana and then give birth to our descendants. The purpose of dark elves is to drain the mana of others. We are just like other elves during the day. Actually, we are normal elves that have the ability to master a forbidden magical skill. In other words, Mommy's mother, and Mommy's father, and Mommy's ancestors drained the power of even more people and gave birth to Mommy."

Vyvyan shook her head. She then stroked my face and then elaborated, "Mera and her tribe were unsuccessful elves. They were unable to benefit from magic and instead were cursed, which is why we must kill them. They can't reveal our secret. We cannot allow others to know that we are dark elves. Do you understand now, Son?"

I nodded, despite understanding but also not understanding.

'Honestly, if that were the case, I don't think there's an issue with Mom being a dark elf. She's no longer the accumulation of blood she originally was. Further, Mom is wise and farsighted. There shouldn't be a problem with this sort of dark

elf, right? I've become numb to my bloodline long ago. As to whether or not I'm a dark elf, I'm not bothered.'

Even if I am, I don't need to suck blood.

"Th-Then what about my child with Lucia...?"

"He or she will be an ordinary elf, because you didn't inherit all of our tribe's blood, Son." Vyvyan stroked my head with a smile.

She then kissed me on my lips, giggled softly, and said, "Keep sleeping, Son. Mommy wants to watch you like this some more... Mommy wants to watch your sleeping face..."

Vyvyan waved her hand gently, and everything before my eyes went dark. I had more questions after that night.

'I don't know what meaning this has, but... but I think I might find out the answer when I don't want to know...'

Ch. 23

The current Nier is very obedient. Actually, she's completely docile and obedient. She used to be absolutely loyal to the empress and revered her. Now, she loves me, in a weird way. Nier doesn't know what love is. Nier's idea of love is pieced together information she receives combined with her own introspection.

From Nier's perspective, love is absolute loyalty and dependence, as well as being more important than anything. Since we got together, Nier has even ignored the empress' orders. As a matter of fact, she just shows her a form of respect, now. For the sake of being with me, she was willing to follow any order the empress gave her.

The empress couldn't say anything, either because Nier rejected her for me.

While the empress didn't like it, she was happy about that one thing

nonetheless since Nier's loyalty is meaningless to her. There are lots of Valkyries. However, Nier's loyalty to me was of utmost importance.

But... Nier is far too loyal to me.

She holds my orders in high regards, to an excessive degree, so... naturally, she views my commands with absolute importance.

The command I happened to give her was, "Teach my guard unit swordsmanship."

Naturally, Nier accepted the job with fervent joy. But... Nier is the Valkyries' instructor. She was very well versed in training Valkyries. The issue was, they were my guard unit... not Valkyries...

Most importantly, Nier trained them like crazy to try and make me happy...

And so, I was looking at a soldier with a stab wound in his lower abdomen, which he nearly died from.

I held his hand tightly. He looked at me with his pale and terrified look.

You're right, it's him; that cute soldier, who looks like a girl. If I hadn't asked Vyvyan to come and use healing magic, he'd be dead.

Nier stood to one side, holding her sword with unease. She looked at me and explained, "Your Majesty... this wound was caused during training, due to carelessness..."

"Come with me." I sighed, then grabbed Nier's hand and pulled her out of the medical room.

I pressed her up against the wall.

Nier had her head down and she was shaking, completely different to how she used to be. Nier cautiously raised her head up to look at me.

In her frightened and shaky soft voice, she said, "Your Majesty... it... it really was an accident... Sorry... Sorry... Please, don't be angry with me... Please, don't be angry with me... You can punish me however you like... Just don't be angry with me..."

I let out a heavy sigh. I then stroked her face and said, "I'm not angry... It's my

fault for not being clear. Nier, they are different to Valkyries. There are lots of Valkyries in the reserve, so it's no big deal if they get injured, or die in training."

"However, these are my only men. I can't replace them if they die. There is nothing I can do if they die in battle, as it would be considered a normal trade-off. But it tugs at my heartstrings if they die. So, please, don't let them get injured in training. I understand that training with real swords produces great results, but they can't afford to. As such, I think you should use wooden swords or blunt swords."

"But... but..." Nier looked up with an expression like she wanted to say something, but didn't dare.

I could detect a tinge of fear in her green eyes.

I held her hand and said, "Just say what you want. Didn't I say I wouldn't get angry?"

"Uhm..." Nier held my hand. She looked up at me and in a serious tone explained, "But, Your Majesty, that is your guard unit, the guard unit that is responsible for keeping you safe from harm. If the results of their training aren't guaranteed, the one who will be in danger is you, Your Majesty... So... so... I... I..."

I smiled, stroked her face, and kissed her lips.

"It's alright, Nier. It's alright. My safety isn't in just their hands, but with you... As long as you're around, I believe that I will surely be safe, so you don't need to be afraid, Nier. Please train them with normal methods." I said.

I was actually a little worried since I wasn't sure if the impression I left on them was worth their blood and sweat.

I gave them the best treatment possible and did everything to satisfy their needs. I wrote strict training and discipline requirements based on the infantry manual I recalled from memory. I was afraid they might not be able to handle such strict demands. Now there's been an injury as well. I can't do anything if they want to quit and leave.

This was my first time training a team and my own army. Without them, I'll have to rely on imperial guards and Valkyries.

I really need them, so I need to ensure they can't leave.

"Alright..." Nier nodded shyly and then grabbed hold of my hand.

We returned to the medical room, and then I held that young-girl-looking soldier's hand...

'How is his hand smoother than Nier's? Young man, this is dangerous...'

I looked at his eyes in agony and softly said, "I'm very sorry. I'm very sorry, umm..."

"Philes... Your Majesty... Philes Romeas..."

"Alright. I shall call you Philes... I'm very sorry, Philes. I'm sorry about the training accident. I will provide you with adequate compensation and care. I will arrange for people to take care of your body and meals during this time, so you don't have to worry."

"Th-... there is no need, Your Majesty..." He struggled to sit up.

Because it affected the wound at his lower abdomen, his entire body jerked from the pain.

I quickly helped him lie back down and then said, "Just relax. Just relax. Just say what you want to."

"Your Majesty... this is our... training with the instructor... We... we have already prepared ourselves mentally for this..."

I noticed trails of sweat run down his forehead as he looked at me. Even though he looked pretty and gentle, his gaze was filled with determination right now.

He looked at me and continued from the bottom of his heart, "We made up our minds... long ago... You respect us, Your Majesty... you helped us... Your Majesty, you asked your own wife to instruct us... so we... so we have resolved to give our all for you... About our training... it is okay... We... we are training for your safety... it is okay..."

I took in a deep breath and looked at his face in silence for a long time.

He closed his eyes as the anaesthetics he had taken before started to take

effect. The agonised expression from the intense pain and terror ,slowly calmed down.

I sat by his side and waited for him to slowly fall asleep. I just looked at his face for a long time in silence.

From behind, Nier tugged on my cape and called out to me in a soft voice, “Your Majesty...”

“Nier...” I turned around and looked at her.

Letting go of his hand, I stood up. I walked to the door and then sincerely said, “I will do my best. I’ll definitely do my best. I will become a master that is worth their blood and sweat. I will work even harder, for their sake.”

Nier chuckled softly. She then made a small bow and said, “Your Majesty, you already are.”

Ch. 24

“Your Highness! Your Highness! Look, look! They’ve bloomed! They’ve bloomed!!” Lucia ran up to me, cheerfully and brightly, holding a flower pot.

I looked up from the documents and saw small white petals on the plant in the pot.

I smiled and said, “Not bad, Lucia. You took good care of it, huh?”

“Of course, you gave them to me, after all!” Lucia puffed her chest out proudly.

She then looked at Nier, who wasn’t too happy, and mocked her, “But it looks like a particularly dense person can’t take care of flowers so that they can bloom. She might’ve even split the seed.”

“If you only know how to swing a sword, just stick to being a bodyguard. What are you doing being a wife? If you can’t even nurture a flower, how are you going to raise a child?”

Nier folded her arms angrily and then indifferently fired back, “Someone is still sticking around, shamelessly refusing to leave, after losing a duel. It’s clearly only because His Majesty is generous and tolerant that she was able to stay. And yet, she’s acting like it’s justified in front of us. I really wonder if it wasn’t your elven shamelessness that caused my seed, which was planted next to it, to die.”

“Okay, enough, ladies.” Freya stepped out and ended their bickering. She then looked at Nier and said, “Miss Nier, your flower did not bloom, correct?”

Nier looked at me somewhat scared and then panicked, “No... it’s just... just... I think... maybe it’s not time for it to bloom yet...”

“Maybe it isn’t.” I looked at Nier, stood up and said, “It’s not your problem, Nier. It also isn’t because Lucia used magic or something similar. It is a problem with the soil. Your soil came from the same place. However, Lucia’s seed came from the elven side, while the seed I gave you, Nier, was from humanity’s side. Put another way; only elven crops can grow on this piece of land and not humanity’s crops.”

“That must be why the land is poor, I guess. No, allow me to correct myself. It’s poor for humans.”

Freya nodded as though she had thought of something, and said, “Is it because of the elven border? If that is the case, I think it will be very difficult to resolve. Since I do not know the exact reason.”

“I think it should be because of mana.” I looked at Lucia’s flower, touched a white petal and elaborated, “The elven lands are filled mana, so the elven crops could naturally adapt to the mana in the soil. However, humanity’s crops couldn’t adapt to the soil, leading to humanity’s crops not growing when planted here.”

“No, I shouldn’t say that. Not all of them couldn’t since some managed to weather it. However, the ones that did manage to grow did poorly and resulted in a very minimal harvest. This means that the land needs to be dealt with.”

Freya let out a hopeless sigh. She then looked at me with a bitter smile and said, “Your Majesty, this is not my field of expertise. Though I can help you with many things, I have no idea how to remove mana from the land. I think that we,

perhaps, require Her Highness' help."

"No, no, no."

I was initially going to do that, but then I felt it wasn't going to work, after some deliberation. The people here suffered for decades because of the land. If I now go and tell them that it was because of elven mana, they'll surely hate the elves to death. Though it's not the fault of the elves, this was indeed a problem caused by their mana.

"What do we do then, Onii-sama? If this continues, there will still be nothing that grows there." Freya looked at me and continued, "Or are you thinking that the amount of mana will reduce over time if you block that river? I am not certain, but if that river is cut off, then our factory will not be able to operate as well. Also, how will we handle our irrigation issue?"

"Ah... of course I won't block off the river... Although the mana should be coming through the river from the elves, I need to think about how to solve this problem." I felt a little torn.

It looks like the elven river can bring mana here. Normally speaking, the elven river is filled with mana. I'm actually quite scared of that river. I must drink water from a well when I'm here. If I drink the water from the river, all of my organs will feel like they're burning painfully.

I can't be without the river.

Although the river doesn't just provide flowing water for the block of land but also my agony, I require the river. Its most important function to me isn't the irrigation function but the power it provides. Without steam engines, this is what I need most.

'How can I satisfy everyone and yet not damage the river? I think this problem could easily be solved if Mommy Vyvyan could lend a hand. But the problem is she can't.'

'This should be a city where humans and elves can get along harmoniously. If I tell the humans that they had to starve because of the elves, they'll definitely hate the elves. Humans are simple creatures. If they have to worry about food as well, they'll definitely hate.'

'If we can't grow crops...'

I pondered the problem for a moment and then asked Freya, "Can we not plant crops?"

Freya paused for a moment and then replied, "Onii-sama, it does not matter if we do not plant crops. Worst case scenario, we do not produce food. We can purchase food or get someone to smuggle food in."

"If we do that, the cost of food would increase. If we did not implement a way to increase the people's income, we would have to feed the people out of our own pockets all the time, which is not possible."

'I'm aware of that. A king's job isn't to share his money, but to allow the people to earn enough.'

'England follows a similar method. As an island, England relies on business for income. Holland is another classic example. Since we require food to be imported, we need to sell other goods with higher value at higher prices. That way, we can prevent a trade deficit.'

'Food isn't actually a valuable good. It's a basic need. The south is a place where food is produced as well. Even if they do have to transport the food a long way to get here, it won't cost that much more.'

'What do I need to do then? Animal husbandry? That won't work. Livestock won't earn much money, and their flesh can't be preserved for long. Making salt-cure meat out of it won't earn us more, and we'd even have to use more salt. That would cause the people to weather high salt prices.'

'Salt isn't cheap. It's a good that can buy out the entirety of bronze coins, as we know from my last fight with the church. How could my people bear that?'

'Okay, so what then? Industrial products? My factory is just a military factory. We absolutely won't be selling the weapons produced. Do I need to make another factory just for the people? I'll be short-handed here then. The amount of area next to the river is fairly small, too. In fact, there's no suitable place to set up another factory.'

'What else is there? Mining? The mine here isn't worth money. Tourism... Okay, the only tourists in this era are rich people with money to waste. People

wouldn't spend over ten days to come here to view a little run-of-the-mill town either.'

'What do I do then?'

Freya and I looked at each other. This was the simplest problem we'd faced since teaming up, yet we were both speechless for the first time.

While holding her flower, Lucia looked at us with puzzlement. Without thinking, she asked, "Your Highness, if we can't plant humanity's stuff, can't we just plant the elves' stuff, then?"

Ch. 25

Lucia was right.

'If human crops can't grow, we just need to plant elven crops. If we must grow elven crops, then that means elves will be needed to manage the crops. They are the only ones who can exchange it for humanity's food for a similar price. In this way, we can empower the farmers to earn the money they require...'

'But what crops do the elves have...? To be honest, I've never seen elven plants... The only one I remember is elven berries which were like raisins and apples. There were also the odd hard-tangerines the merchants sold last time.'

'Oh, there was also that sour berry I was given to help me sober up from the wine. But humans have seeds for that berry too except that they use it to add a sour flavour. It feels like a substitute for lemons. Whatever the case, I don't think that this sort of crop alone is enough. I want to grow tobacco and cotton.'

It'd be best if we could grow tobacco, cocoa, and coffee beans. Not that we have to have those crops, but definitely those types of crops.

'Tea won't do. Humanity is growing tea leaves already, while the elven tea probably won't suit humans. Not to mention that I'm still not willing to consider it tea. I prefer to call it tree-leaves water.'

'As someone from the East, I will not allow that crude tree leaf stuff to be called tea!'

Vyvyan gently placed her hand on my head. She held a tool made from goose-feathers in her slender fingers which she used to gently pick my ears. She smiled and said, "Planting...? Truthfully, Mommy isn't too knowledgeable on the topic."

"The type that you can sell and is a necessity... I think I'll target drinks or tobacco... Cotton could work, too."

I was lying with my head rested on Mom's thigh. I was staring at the flower embroidery on Mom's clothing near her lower abdomen, in a daze.

Elves are a level above when it comes to weaving. Vyvyan's clothing has always been a little more extravagant than Elizabeth's. Of course, perhaps it was because the human empress didn't care about her clothing, and therefore always dressed plainly.

"Cotton? Elves have always extracted a white flower that grows on a tree to make clothes. That type of tree needs to be grown for a very long time before it produces. If you want to sell these, you might have to wait for a very long time. If you want something else, we elves do produce satin."

"Satin?"

"The material used for your pyjamas."

'Ah, so they call it satin and not silk here.'

Vyvyan continued fiddling with my ear as she continued with her explanation, "However, that isn't extracted from plants, but an insect... If you want to raise them, you need more than a field. You need a multi-functional textile distribution place."

"Is there anything else, then...?"

I still wasn't discouraged. I have faith that the elves have a trade-able crop that I can grow. Even if they don't, I trust that there are many other choices, even if it's not a crop that would be a golden product. If nothing else, we can go with berries that are worth money, too.

"Hmm..." Mom looked around with her eyes.

She smiled and replied, "There are dyes, then. If it must be something to do with clothing, then the thing we elves are most proud of is our dye. Dyes from both humanity and elves are extracted from plants. However, our elven dyes aren't colours, but could be better described as a type of mana. The mana in it will disappear in water, due to the difference in mana concentration. But since humanity's side doesn't have mana, the colour of clothing which was dyed using mana will never fade. Most importantly, this type of mana is more eye-catching than normal dyes, since a dead form of beauty can't compare to one that is alive."

"That will work!"

'Dyes will work! No wonder I felt that the colours of Vyvyan's clothes were brighter than Elizabeth's. Turns out it was because the dye for her clothes wasn't a dye, but mana. Vyvyan was right. If humans can maintain the colour longer due to a lack of mana here, then that means rich ladies will definitely fight for this dye.'

Vyvyan stroked my head and I calmed down.

Mom stuck the goose-feather inside my ear and picked it as she elaborated, "Of course, if you want to do that then you can't rely on just humans alone to purify this dye. Elves must be the ones to purify it to be able to bring out the mana. As such, if you want to do that, you must sell your raw materials over to us."

"Ah..."

'That's not such a good idea, is it?' I've never learnt high-level economics, but I am aware of this. 'By that, I mean that we can't make enough money to cover the cost if we rely on selling raw materials. We can only make money by processing materials and producing them. Only third-world countries, countries that are just getting off the ground and lack finances would sell raw materials.'

I'd probably only be earning spare change selling these dyes. I would still have to ask Vyvyan to help us out as my mother. If planting in this field earned people money that they could purchase food with, and yet not reach a surplus, then this city won't ever be able to develop.

"Mom... the farmers won't make money if we did that... Can't you ask elves to come here? If elves were here too, we could successfully plant the crop and process it here before selling it off."

"I'm afraid that's not possible, Son."

Mom shook her head with a helpless smile and explained, "Elves are not a race that likes to migrate, Son. You should have noticed it by now, too. Elves only like to stay within their own forest, not to mention their opposition towards interacting with other races, due to the importance they place on bloodlines. Only by doing so can they ensure the purity of bloodlines. Mommy cannot use Mommy's own power to force the elves and humans to cohabitate, because Mommy knows that it is something elves definitely cannot accept."

"Is there really no way...? I mean, Her Majesty and my father gave birth to me, didn't they?"

"I gave birth to you!" Vyvyan harshly cut me off, and I zipped my mouth.

Vyvyan wasn't willing to accept this reality, no matter what. Vyvyan calmed herself down and then continued, "There are very few elves who like humans. It was only Onii-sama who was strongly curious. If Onii-sama were still alive, then perhaps, humans and elves would be a little closer."

"However, as it stands at present, the corpses of the soldiers from the war ten years ago have yet to turn cold, and their vengeance is still left unfulfilled. The elves who can do business with humans are already showing the utmost level of tolerance."

"Asking elves to come here is definitely impossible. Furthermore, elves killed their fair share of humans, too. Do you think humans could treat elves kindly? Son, humans have never treated us equally."

"Look, they're trafficking us elves. They kidnapped us elves. We are just goods to them. That is why elves won't forgive humans. Elves and humans are only maintaining the most basic form of peace because of your existence."

Vyvyan sighed and then stroked my head in a tender way. She continued in a soft voice, "Son, if humans can't treat elves with dignity, elves will never get along with humans. Son, you are also an elf. You must remember this. Do not

test the ugliness and darkness of humans with the dignity of elves. If possible, do not let elves and humans be together. If the two races meet, violence could occur.”

I silently looked at the embroidery on Mom’s clothes.

Mom didn’t say any more. She just gently stroked my head while humming a soothing melody. She waited for me to fall asleep on her thigh like I was a child.

My feelings were all tangled up. The biggest communication obstacle between the two races is the resentment elves hold for humans, and the contempt humans have for elves. The bloody war from ten years ago further triggers their violent sentiments for each other.

Honestly, as opposed to saying that the two races have a long history of hatred, it might be more accurate to say that I’m the biggest obstacle between them, preventing them from communicating with one another.

I almost managed to make the two races go all out in a life-and-death fight a decade ago, but I was now very sad. I’m an elf and a human. The resentment between the two races was more like a knot in my heart. I had no means of helping either side or attacking either side. The one in agony from the fighting of the two races was I alone.

A moment later, I grabbed Mom’s hand and said, “Mom... I want... I want for elves and humans to get along harmoniously.”

“...”

Mom’s hand froze up. She revealed a bitter smile and said in a soft voice, “Son... what you just said... what you said, just now, was the exact same thing as your father, my brother...”

Glossary

*His reference to the East about tea is basically Southeast Asia, or China in his case where tea is a big thing. Hence, tea ceremonies.

**That was my best attempt at separating silk, from silk. In Chinese, you have multiple ways for referring to them, but in English, not so. I know there are some subtle differences, but we will just have to make do unless you have a

better suggestion

Ch. 26

"This is basically the schedule for the next week. Please go over it. If there are no problems, I shall make arrangements according to this schedule. I took the schedule Freya handed to me. I took a look at the things listed, scratched my head, and while wearing a helpless smile said: "It looks like next week's jobs are all old routines."

"That is right. There is basically nothing left that requires you to attend to yourself. Most things are now on the right track. With regards to matters that you are relatively more concerned about, people you trust have been delegated to the jobs so you do not need to pay any more attention to them."

Freya made a small bow and then took the document I signed my name on. She then bowed to the empress who was drinking tea by the side and then said: "I shall take my leave now then, onii-sama, your majesty."

"Alright."

I was initially somewhat worried that Freya and Elizabeth's relationship wouldn't be amicable, because I wasn't sure if Elizabeth would accept me suddenly taking in a random girl and letting her call herself my sister. But I never expected Elizabeth to say nothing about my decision and didn't do anything to Freya either. To the contrary, the two of them seemed to have reached an agreement where they just stayed out of each other's way.

Except that right now.....

I looked at Mommy-Elizabeth who was lying on the bench reading a novel and said: "Mom, if you have something to talk to me about, just tell me. You've been sitting here for the entire day....."

"That's because mommy wants to watch you." Elizabeth placed her book down, shyly tilted her head and with a smile continued, "Mommy feels that you look very cute when you're focused at work. You resemble your father so much."

Mommy likes watching you serious at work, and also feels a little nostalgic.....”

Mom walked up behind me and pinched my face a little hard. She continued: “And haven’t you been too attached to that woman recently while neglecting mommy? Mommy saw you walk out of a room with that woman, you know? I’m your mommy and yet you went to look for her and not mommy...?”

“Mom.... I’m sorry! I’m sorry!”

Mom got angrier and angrier as she spoke as well as pinching me harder and harder. Mommy-Elizabeth’s hands aren’t like Vyvyan’s. Once Mommy-Elizabeth put her strength into it, I felt like my skin was going to peel off.....

Elizabeth let go and then walked over to the bench and sat down. She tapped her thighs while looking at me and grumbled: “I’m your true biological mother regardless. Son, you must know how to weigh the importance of things. Since you’ve lain on that woman’s thighs like they were a pillow, mommy wants to do that too. So come here, son.”

I knew that I couldn’t say “no” after seeing and hearing mom’s dead-serious gaze and tone. I looked at the time. It was already night-time so I don’t think anyone will be visiting. I walked over to mom’s side, lied down on the bench and rested my head on mom’s thigh. Elizabeth’s body stiffened up while her hand shook as it floated above my head. I opened my eyes to look at mom. Elizabeth’s face was slightly red with excitement and at the same time, nervousness. She was so nervous she didn’t know where to put her hands.

“What do I do...? I... What do I... umm... do I touch you, son? Son... is... is this soothing? Do you want to change positions or anything.....?”

Elizabeth spoke incoherently. She cautiously placed her palm on my forehead and froze up seemingly not daring to move. Hopeless, I smiled. Elizabeth gets so nervous she doesn’t know what to do as soon as we do anything intimate even though we’re a lot closer now and I’m always by her side.

She was the one who wanted me to rest my head on her thigh and yet she’s the one who’s a nervous-wreck. What a funny mom.

“It’s alright, mom. Just do as you please. It’s comfortable, so you don’t have to mind.”

Elizabeth's thigh isn't the same as Vyvyan's, but it's still really comfortable nonetheless. They both had different scents yet both could calm me down. I lay on my side and looked at the buttons on Elizabeth's military attire. I wonder how long she's worn this for. The colour where the buttons are done up have started to fade.

Military attire holds a special implicit meaning to Elizabeth because she still reminisces the time she spent on the battlefield conquering. She still wears her military attire now, one as habit, and two, to reminisce the past. Of course, it also acted as a warning to neighbouring nations. She hadn't taken off her military attire yet, so if they thought about rebelling, she could go to battle right away.

"Son... son... son....."

Mom's breathing sped up. It feels like Elizabeth is extremely excited right now. She cautiously stroked my head. I could see her lower abdomen expanding and deflating easily, clearly showing how intense her breathing was. She stroked my head and then said: "Son... son... do you have anything you need for this city...? If you do... if you do, just let mommy know. Mommy will definitely get you it."

I hesitated for a moment. It should be okay to bring it up with Elizabeth now, right? Elizabeth isn't the normal-Elizabeth after all. I actually believe that Elizabeth would be able to satisfy anything I ask for right now. If that's the case... I really would be able to realise what I want. If I can make it a reality, then this continent will enter a long period of peace.

This is quite ironic. People achieve peace through negotiations at a table and yet I'm doing it lying on two female rulers' thighs. Why do I feel like I'm a boy-toy.....?

"Mom... if possible, I hope... humanity and elves can form an alliance....."

While looking at Elizabeth's lower abdomen, I tested her by saying, "I think... I think... that if humans and elves can get along, then it would be good for both parties....."

Elizabeth's hand froze up on my head. Her body froze up completely like the battery in a machine died. I looked up and noticed she looked at me like it was

the first time she'd met me. She looked at me with both surprise and indifference like I said something that could be considered treason.

"Mom....."

"Mm....."

I started to get a little scared so I tested her again. Mom cut me with a murmer and then after a moment of hesitation said: "Son, you should already be aware that elves saved my life and taught me some things, so I personally don't hate elves....."

"Then....."

"But that was before you were born."

Elizabeth cut me off once again. She looked at me and in a serious tone explained: "Son, think about it properly. If it weren't for Vyvyan, would you suffer in so much pain on full-moon nights? I know that you might not blame Vyvyan, but I won't forgive her when I see you in pain like that every full-moon night. I won't forgive Vyvyan. And do you think I can forget the war ten years ago? I can't. Son, whether it's Vyvyan or I, neither of us can forget that war ten years ago. Do you know what that war was called? It was the "war for our son". If I go and shake hands and be friendly with Vyvyan now, that means I'm giving in, which also means I'm letting Vyvyan have you. The agreement we signed ten years ago was a conditional ceasefire, not a victory-agreement. Son, as long as you are still alive, Vyvyan and I won't start a large-scale war. However, our dignity as mothers will not allow us to bow our head to each other."

"Mom! That was ten years ago! And I'm by your sides now! Can't you just get along?!"

"That's impossible, son."

Mom pressed her arms against my arm firmly and sternly continued, "Son, there can only be one mom. Wives are a different story. You can only have one mom. I love you, my son. Vyvyan does too. And so, we won't back down, ever."

While Freya spread a thick layer of jam on her bread, she looked at me and said: "That is very normal, onii-sama. Her majesty and her highness will not back down when it comes to you. Indeed, if one party were to try to become friendly with the other then their enmity could be resolved. However, the party that initiates it would be acknowledging they are not your true mother. We already have the result of the war for their son ten years ago. They would rather destroy their own empire than see that happen."

I let out a heavy sigh and then said: "That leaves me in a very awkward position. I don't have the lofty goal of world peace. I just want to have a stable business. Why do I feel that I'm the reason the world isn't at peace?"

"You ignited a war that almost destroyed the continent ten years ago, so of course you have to carry the burden of the continent not being at peace." Freya took a bite of her bread. Some jam and cream got on her mouth. She likes sweet stuff since she's a kid. Luna smiled. She picked up a napkin and helped her wipe her mouth. She then swallowed the bread in her mouth and went on, "However, you do not need to feel guilty about anything. The entire matter had nothing to do with you. In my opinion, it would be more correct to say you are the victim. The war ten years ago shook the Earth and heavens, so ten years is not enough to erase the pain of it either. Consequently, we should focus on the present and not occupy ourselves with how to get your two mothers to get along, am I right?"

"True....."

My moms would never back down when it comes to me both in the past and now in the present. It looks like though they can have afternoon tea together and have a friendly chat, there are important things they still can't accept.

If I stay with one side longer than the other, the other will get angry.

"Your highness!!"

A lazy voice suddenly called out to me from behind and before I could turn my head around, a petite body leapt at me and hugged me around my waist from behind before sliding onto the ground, and finally resting her head on my thigh. Man, I was so shocked I tossed the small pie I picked up onto the plate. Nier snorted with displeasure. She cut her bread in front of her aggressively as if the

bread was Lucia's neck.

I stroked Lucia's small head and greeted her with a smile: "Good morning, Lucia."

Lucia's bedtime is a little different to mine. If I sleep with Lucia at night, I usually get awakened when I sense someone watching me. When I wake up, I find Lucia looking straight at me..... Lucia used to work at night and then come back to sleep for a few hours at dawn. I strongly suspect that Lucia's usual lazy look is because she isn't fully awake yet!

Being used to operating at night, she definitely can't sleep at night, plus she doesn't have the buffs provided by wind elves so she only trains in swordsmanship and archery right now. She also learns to use firearms under my supervision. Without the buffs provided by the wind elves, Lucia has become a lot weaker. As a result, she's become my full-time wife and rarely wears her combat attire now.

"Ah... good morning, your highness... I want some too! I want some too!"

After seeing the meat-juice flow out of the small pie I cut up, Lucia started a ruckus on my thighs. I smiled hopelessly and then cut it up into a smaller piece to feed Lucia. Lucia looked like a puppy asking for food on my thigh. She was so cute.

I stroked Lucia's head and asked: "Are you still not used to sleeping at night?"

"Yeah... I still can't sleep at night... and even more so when I sleep with you... I can only get a little bit of sleep when the sun is about to come up..... I feel really tired recently and I don't have much of an appetite....."

Lucia twisted her body and then looked at Nier in a disgruntled way and said: "Cows are just cows. Don't they feel tired even if they sleep with his majesty all night? Uhm, that's a barbarian for you. I admire that barbaric energy, except, you're stuck being a cow."

Nier scoffed and then stabbed her fork aggressively into the sausage in front of her as if the sausage was Lucia's heart. Annoyed, she fired back: "I manage to gain energy from his majesty each time. How could I be tired doing what I enjoy with his majesty? If you're so tired next to his majesty, you must be sick of him,

huh? Animals are animals after all, huh? They'll wag their tail for anyone."

"What did you say?! It's not a human's place to be questioning my love for his highness!! I've loved his highness for ten years. Three months ago, you were still being cold toward his highness. Do you know how much you hurt him during that time? And now you're here trying to ask for his highness's love. Do you know how much you've hurt his highness?!"

"You shut up!"

Lucia hit Nier's weak-spot and Nier hit Lucia's weak-spot. The two of them glared at each other angrily. The quiet dinner table was about to get flipped over.

"Ugh....."

I never expected Lucia to be defeated. Lucia covered her mouth and sprawled out on my leg like she was in pain. I held her with concern and said: "What's wrong, Lucia? Are you feeling sick? If you're not well, I'll call her highness to take a look at you....."

"No need. I'm already here."

Why is Vyvyan able to appear oddly wherever she's needed?

Vyvyan entered the door from outside. She looked at us before smiling and said: "Good morning, son. Mommy heard you did something with Elizabeth in the room last night. Mommy can't pretend mommy didn't see anything. Mommy is very angry, you know.....? You shouldn't be sharing a room with a woman before notifying mommy. Mommy can't support what you did, you know.....? It's soon to be a full-moon night. For your safety, you must stay with mommy a day before and a day after it."

"Is there a need to?!"

Hey, hey, hey, you just said something very strange! What do you mean Elizabeth and I did something in the room? We were just discussing our nation and our people! We didn't do anything! And she's my mom, what would I do?! Up until now, the only thing Elizabeth did that crossed the line was trying to pull my pants down in her drunken stupor. She does a lot better job of controlling herself than you, and you're suspecting her?!

"Of course."

There was an aggressive hint of "do not question me" in Vyvyan's eyes..... I immediately cowered and didn't dare to say a word.....

Vyvyan hugged Lucia. She looked at Lucia's eyes and painful expression. She then reached her hand out to feel Lucia's tummy and chest. A tinge of happiness suddenly crept into her eyes. She then pressed her hand on Lucia's tummy and quietly chanted something. A seemingly colourless gold light entered Lucia's body and Lucia coughed intensely. But then her complexion returned to a healthy pink.

"Alright... you're fine now."

Vyvyan hugged Lucia who was a little weak. She then looked at me with a serious look and a smile she couldn't hide and said: "Sorry, son, but you will need to separate with Lucia for the meantime. After you two get married, Lucia will need to return to the elven imperial capital to look after herself, since... a pregnant elf is better suited to living in the elven lands."

"What?!"

Everyone froze in place. Nier's fork which she stabbed in mid-way stopped there and she looked at Lucia with utter astonishment. I knocked my chair over as well. I looked at Lucia and my entire body shook.

Vyvyan couldn't hide the smile on her face. She shook as she said: "It looks like it was right for you to sleep together on the full-moon night. Your mana was at its peak at the time so Lucia was able to smoothly get pregnant. Congratulations, son, you will soon be a father."

Lucia stared at her tummy blankly as she rubbed it. She wore a look of complete disbelief as she stuttered: "R-R-Really? ... His highness's child....."

Leaning on the table, I almost fell over. The sudden joyous news made me light-headed. Everything before my eyes went pitch-black. Luna came up to support me. I looked at Lucia blankly. My entire mind was blank. I had no idea what to do to celebrate.

Nier slammed her hand on the table, clenched her teeth aggressively and thundered at me: "I don't believe it!! I don't believe it!! Clearly! Clearly his

majesty and I did it more! How come she's pregnant first?! Your majesty! We have to continue tonight! It looks like we did it too few times! I want more!!"

You want more? Sure. But I only have so much!! Could you please consider if it's objectively possible?!

Ch. 28

I was very elated to find out that Lucia was pregnant. I was so elated and excited I couldn't stop smiling all day at work.

After Lucia found out about her pregnancy, she hugged me and cried tears of joy. She was so excited that she was quivering all over. While rubbing her abdomen, she kissed me non-stop, and then she began her official child-nurturing journey.

As someone with experience, Vyvyan told Lucia what she could and couldn't do.

Elven and human pregnancies were different. Elves didn't have to restrict themselves from too many physical activities. Probably because mana was continuously protecting their child, thereby decreasing the chances of them getting hurt.

Vyvyan gave Lucia some of her mana, providing my child with a strong castle wall that couldn't be torn down.

My child inside wouldn't get hurt even if you were to aggressively kick Lucia in her abdomen.

Of course, if someone were to actually dare to do that, I'd butcher them. I now felt an odd desire to protect. I want to stay by Lucia's side and not leave.

After I had written Lucia's name for the n^{th} time on a document, Freya's patience finally crumbled, so she called Lucia to my side to watch me work.

But even then, I was still absent-minded. I couldn't stop worrying about

something happening to Lucia. Even though she was just reading a book on the bench, I was worried that the bench was wobbly and Lucia could fall.

'I think I should get Luna to stick closely to Lucia so she can inform me immediately if something happens.'

"Onii-sama, while I can understand your joy at being a father, could you please stop being distracted? You've signed this document in the wrong place for the seventh time now, and you've even stamped the table!!" Freya lost it again.

She angrily slammed her hand on my table and continued, "Onii-sama! If this is how you are going to be, why not spend some time playing with Lucia. You are not going to produce any results, working like this! If I were to put a marriage certificate, with my name on it, in front of you right now, would you still sign it without hesitation?!"

I thought about it and then nodded.

Freya let out a heavy sigh. She then placed her hand on her forehead and lethargically said, "... Okay, that was a bad analogy. In any case, Onii-sama... Her Majesty called for you, or rather, she called for you a while ago... Go and see her. Leave this to me... I can use your stamp and signature, right? Alright, thank you, Onii-sama. You go and readjust your mind first..."

I dawdled for a moment before standing up. I asked, "Mommy Elizabeth?"

"Yes. I imagine it is to congratulate you on your pregnancy... ptoo, I mean, Miss Lucia's pregnancy... And tonight is the official banquet. I hope that you can prepare properly for it. Do not embarrass yourself at the banquet."

With her hand on her forehead, Freya powerlessly grumbled, "Why have I become so irritable and absent-minded after Miss Lucia got pregnant... Could it be that I mind Onii-sama becoming a father?"

"Isn't that a good thing? I can understand you being happy for me. I'm off, Freya. Work properly." I smiled, scrubbed Freya's head and then walked over to kiss Lucia on her cheek. I then grabbed my cape by the side and left the office.

Freya watched me leave and shouted, "I don't want to hear that from you!"

She then lowered her eyes to look at the stamp in front of her and muttered, “But... I don’t feel happy... In fact, like Miss Luna... it makes me feel uncomfortable...”

I opened the door to Mommy Elizabeth’s room. I then looked at Mom, who was sitting behind the desk reading a book, and made a small bow.

“Your Majesty, did you call for me?” I queried.

The Valkyrie behind her closed the door.

Mom looked at a very formal letter in her hand. She then looked up at me, smiled and said, “Ah, you’re here, Son. First, congratulations on Lucia’s pregnancy. You’ll soon be a father. My, that means I’ll be a grandma. Things surely have changed. I’m old now. I’m old now.”

I pursed my lips and said, “Mom, you’re not even forty yet, are you? You’re not that old.”

“Yes, but humans feel that they’re old when faced with death or new lives. More so than ever now, as I look at the two together.”

Elizabeth fiddled with the letter, then looked at me with a smile that exuded an ambiguous vibe and said, “Son, the lord of Socina City is dead.”

“Ah... Socina City?”

‘I seem to have some impression of Socina City. Oh, right, it was the city Elizabeth was almost married off to when she was fourteen.’

‘That city is in the north and to the east of the elven lands. The climate there is very cold, especially in winter. It’s basically located on the north-east of the continent, which once fought with this nation.’

‘But this is only knowledge I acquired from books I’ve read. I’ve never been there. There are no conflicts there either.’

‘As Elizabeth gained momentum and power, she declared it a vassal state. They pay taxes on time every year and send presents every year when it’s the empress’s birthday. It’s a law-abiding city that’s not exactly interesting.’

‘It can be considered one of the well-behaved vassal states.’

"Yes, Socina City." Elizabeth looked at me and continued, "Socina City can be considered a very interesting city. Socina City and Rosvenor City have quite the close history. Their ruler, who just passed away, was almost my husband, and his successor was nearly your wife."

"Wait. Wait a second, Mom. Why have I never heard about this? I don't know anything about that 'something something' successor."

I looked at Mom dumbfounded.

"Ah, that's fine because that got dashed. I must say, I really liked that girl. She's beautiful, gentle, graceful, generous, and carries herself in an elegant manner. She's called the northern kingdom's Elizabeth. Unfortunately... she married that ruler, who was twenty-years older than her, so that she wouldn't have to marry you. And because that old geezer doesn't have an heir, she became the next ruler of Socina City." Elizabeth looked at me.

'It sounds like she's an amazing girl.' I dawdled.

Mom rarely compliments anyone but she had nothing but compliments for this girl, which proves that she is indeed outstanding. However, I didn't feel it was a pity. Nier and Lucia are the most amazing girls I've seen.

"Then the new ruler... which is this girl... will she affect us?"

"No. Though she is very competent and popular, she's too young and idealistic. Son, did you know? She wants for everybody to have their own land, to have everyone learn production skills and to stop merchants from exploiting people... She's always suggesting some 'businesses should belong to nations' theory, and illustrating a beautiful world without inequality and oppression. But that's what proves she's naive to no end." Elizabeth wore a mocking smile as she spoke.

But I was astounded by what I had heard.

'Production materials belonging to the people, land being divided, state-owned commercial and industrial businesses, isn't this a socialism prototype? That's no out-dated or stupid thought. That's a new way of thinking where production abilities have reached an acceptable level!'

'Could... Could she be a socialist like me?'

"Oh, but let's put her business aside for a moment. Let's talk about something more important. Son, I'm very unhappy about Lucia getting pregnant first. Are you not trying hard enough with Nier?"

"Mom... do you still not know how hard I try?" I tried to weep but couldn't shed a tear.

'This definitely isn't my fault! I've already done my best. It's not my fault Nier isn't pregnant! I'm definitely innocent this time. If Lucia can get pregnant, but not Nier, then it's not my fault, but Nier's!'

"Alright then. But you mustn't let Nier be without a child. Vyvyan will get the upper hand if you only have an elf descendant! Whatever the case, Mommy hereby orders you: You must get Nier pregnant in the shortest amount of time possible! I've prepared drugs for Nier already. Get started tonight..."

'Please don't treat me like I'm an animal! I want my human rights! I want my human rights! I want that I-don't-know-the-name-of socialist to come and give me my human rights! Don't hand me over to Nier! Don't hand me over to the current Nier! You'll lose your dear son! I'm serious! You really will!!!'

Ch. 29

"Your Highness... do you feel that Miss Lucia's clothes do not look good?" The designer held her clothes and looked at me as though she wanted to weep but couldn't shed a tear.

Tonight is the most formal banquet. You could consider it the official announcement before our wedding.

Nier is the star tonight. She will be announcing her identity as my wife, the princess, to the nobles tonight.

'I reckon this news will spread to the entire continent real quickly.'

But I'm currently in Lucia's room. I was not going to let Lucia wear these clothes, no matter what.

If you're asking why I can tell you that it's not because it looks ugly. To be fair,

it would be very becoming of Lucia. The colour and size all fit her very well. The small components and ornaments would really accentuate Lucia's cuteness and playfulness...

In short, it's a perfect fit and deserves the compliment 'there's a reason the empress liked this designer...'

But I just couldn't accept one thing, and that is that was designed to pull her belly in slightly.

'I can't allow Lucia to wear this. Nier can, but not Lucia. Lucia is pregnant. I can't let her wear such dangerous clothing! No way!'

"I think it's alright, Your Highness. There's nothing wrong with it when I wear it." Lucia was currently in just her white pantyhose and under-shirt...

'Why does her under-shirt look like erotic sleepwear? Or is this some sort of vintage style?'

I hugged Lucia and tenderly explained, "No, it's not about whether or not it's comfortable. You might be fine, but I'm worried seeing you in it."

"You're too worried, Your Highness. It's fine. I think it's fine. I believe that our child isn't so weak. Moreover, our child is protected by Her Highness' mana, so I should be fine in this. My tummy hasn't started to protrude yet, either."

"Y-Yeah...?"

"And... and if you don't hurry, we won't make it. If I have to change it now, I'll have to go nude. Your Highness, if you are going to be by my side, I want to show off my most beautiful side... because... I'm your wife..." Lucia pressed her head into my chest and moved it around with a blissful smile as she spoke.

I held her tightly in my arms and sniffed the clear scent of the forest and plants in her hair. I kissed her on her forehead and then said, "Alright then. But if you feel uncomfortable, you must tell me. Don't force yourself. Leave right away if you're not feeling well and don't worry about a thing."

"Alright."

'Lucia is very obedient now. Perhaps it's because she's in a great mood after becoming pregnant, as well as being considerate of our child. Lucia can't be all'

bouncy and lively now because she's pregnant. Her eyes don't look sleepy now either. As a matter of fact, she now often curls up and falls asleep on my thigh. She's become clingier after getting pregnant as well.'

I stepped outside while Lucia got changed. Just as I opened the door, I saw Nier standing to the side waiting.

She had both hands in front of her. She was dressed in a light-purple dress. She stood erect gracefully like a purple rose.

She didn't wear simple, faint makeup this time. She wore beautiful and formal makeup. Nier's hair was done up in a bun and positioned high up, revealing her white marble-like neck. Her rosy cheeks and lips would give anyone a strong urge to kiss them.

But she didn't wear a happy expression. Instead, she looked into my eyes with an obvious hint of sadness.

Nier made a small bow while looking at me and then said, "Your Majesty... please prepare yourself..."

I noticed that her eyes were slightly red. I tilted my head and asked, "What's wrong, Nier? You don't look too happy. You're the star today. Could it be that you're not happy about something in regards to being with me? Or is it something else?"

"No..." Nier gently shook her head and then walked up to me. She grabbed ahold of my hands and gently leaned her head on my chest. She took in a deep breath and, with a shaky, soft voice said, "Sorry... Your Majesty... Sorry... Please do not abandon me... I will try hard... I will definitely try hard..."

"I won't abandon you, Nier. Haven't I told you many times already? I won't abandon you or Lucia no matter what happens." I embraced her. I clasped her face gently and wiped away her tears. I went on, "Don't cry, Nier. Your makeup will be spoiled, otherwise. It would be a pity to spoil such a beautiful look."

"... Uhm." Nier took in a deep breath through her nose. She then grabbed me tightly and softly added, "Your Majesty, I will work hard. I definitely will... Please look forward to it. I will be able to do anything that woman can, so please do not give me the cold shoulder because of this..."

"Nier, what exactly are you worried about?"

"Because... because... child..." Nier touched her flat tummy and softly said, "We've already done so much and yet I haven't gotten pregnant... Your Majesty... am I not trying hard enough...?"

"Oh, you've definitely tried hard enough! You're already trying very, very hard!! You don't need to try any harder!"

'If you try any harder, I'm going to die! I'm not joking! You're already trying very hard. Name me one night you didn't fall asleep after being completely satisfied. I suspect you're still not pregnant because you don't slow down or rest! So don't try any harder. I think we should now enter a buffer period!'

"I will take some drugs. I will eat appropriately. I will definitely carry your child. I'll eat anything, regardless of what it is." Nier's eyes were full of determination, the same sort of determination she had when she was serving the empress with her life.

I pulled her into my arms, stroked her head and said, "You don't need to, Nier. You don't have to do this. Don't ruin your health with drugs with questionable origins. It doesn't matter if you don't get pregnant. The ones I love are you two, not the children you will give birth to. I will not love one of you more than the other for any reason. Let's take it slowly. You'll definitely have a child."

"That's not it... Your Majesty, it's not just because I'm afraid you'll leave me. The most important reason is... I'm honestly jealous... I want to become a mother. I want my own child... I like children, so I want to have my own child."

"Still, don't go consuming those weird drugs. I'll ask Mom for the reason because it might be my problem. I'm half-blooded, so it could be that my mana makes it hard for a human to get pregnant. But there's no chance you won't get pregnant because my father is an elf while my mother is the empress. So you'll definitely get pregnant. Don't rush, Nier."

I'm seriously panicked now. I must persuade Nier. I'm not worried about her doing something, but something happening to me! I'm honestly scared. I'll be completely dead if Nier tries any harder. I can't let my fighting spirit dim down because of this. Though, honestly speaking, it does feel great...

"Ah! You two are cheating behind my back again!" Lucia's voice separated us.

Nier snorted angrily and exclaimed, "I'm his main wife! Don't you forget that you lost our duel!"

"Your child? Where?"

"You lost the duel! And my body is better than yours!"

"Your child? Where?"

"I... I... Can we stop talking about children?"

"You don't even have a child and you call yourself a wife?!"

"I'll have one! I definitely will!"

'Please, Lucia, don't provoke Nier. Nier will be fine, but not me. I'll die!! I'll be the one who suffers!!'

Ch. 30

The main hall was opened specifically to host the banquet in the palace. This place is much smaller than Mom's palace, however; I don't have many guests.

Most of the major officials couldn't make it here because they had to maintain the massive empire. Alice and Castell had already returned home. While Vyvyan was here, she only brought the imperial guards I asked for and herself.

Most of the guests in attendance tonight were the children of the major officials. Most of them were sons who were taking on their father's mantle and entering the political arena.

The main purpose of this sort of event is to show up and, ideally, get connected with His Majesty.

As someone who serves the empress, it would definitely gain the empress' antipathy if they went and tried to ingratiate themselves with the prince. Not to

mention that the prince wouldn't be interested in an old man.

As such, their children, who were of similar age, were best. If they could become friends, then their children would have a smooth-sailing career in the political arena.

"Therefore, Onii-sama, most of those who take the initiative to come and try to ingratiate themselves with you will just be drinking friends to you. You can be friends with some of them."

Freya adjusted her tie and then continued, "It would be boring, if you did not have friends to pass time with, as the emperor. If you had too many vassals who were serious about work, I imagine you would go crazy. I do not think you are the type who likes to stay in the palace all day, after all."

I looked at Freya's cute pink dress and snickered.

Freya looked at me with surprise and then looked at herself. She tugged on her dress and then said, "Does it look bad, Onii-sama? I think it is alright... or do I look comical in this? It is very rude to laugh at a lady in a beautiful dress, Onii-sama~."

"No, no, no. It's very cute, honest. Freya, you look very cute like this. Really." I stroked her head... Of course, I was gentle since her hair was done up... I said, "It's just that it feels funny to me to hear such serious and mature things from someone in such a cute dress."

"In other words, I just need to be a cute and playful sister?" Freya giggled mischievously.

She quickly hugged my arm. She then went up on her toes with a smile and gently whispered into my ear, "Or... do you prefer me to call you Onii-chan~ Hehe... Or... beloved Onii-chan?"

All the hairs on my body stood up. Her 'Onii-chan' almost made my knees weak.

I never paid attention, but when she suddenly grabbed my arm I could feel her soft breasts and smell the nice fragrance on her.

'When did this young girl start growing up?!"

"But your arms are already reserved, right?" Freya pulled her hands back and then returned to her usual self, the Freya who always looks like she's smiling, yet not.

She looked forward, as though she was speaking to herself, yet at the same time like she was saying what she said for me to hear.

"Miss Lucia and Miss Nier already occupy one of your arms each, I guess. In that case... what do I grab onto? I have no place next to Onii-sama, right? I am just someone Onii-sama took in after all."

"Freya..."

"Ah, it's fine, Onii-sama. You need not pity me." Freya smiled as she dodged the hand that I went to stroke her head with. She continued, "You and I are considered very friendly partners after all. I initially wanted to revive my household. But I do not know when I started to forget about that."

"You sure are sly, Onii-sama. Were you trying to make me work for free? Onii-sama, do not forget our agreement. I offer my body, mind and soul, while you help me revive my household."

I looked into Freya's eyes. I could never understand the emotion in her eyes. Freya is a very mature girl. However, regardless of how mature she is, she is but just a child. Maybe it's just my imagination but I noticed that Freya was full of loneliness.

"Alright." My lips twitched a few times, but I couldn't offer any words of comfort. Rather, my consolation would be an insult to her determination. Freya wanted to show me a determined look so, to respect her wish, I didn't offer any consolation.

She wasn't pitiful. It's not pitiful to get what you want through your own efforts. And so, I agreed to her request.

"I guess we have an agreement then, Onii-sama. Your wives have arrived and so have your moms." It was particularly weird to hear them addressed with plurals.

I turned my head around to see the four of them come over. I must say, both Nier and Lucia are beautiful girls. They could take one's heart away when they

wear makeup and formal clothing, with even more ease. However, they were undeniably pale in comparison to my two mothers.

Vyvyan was dressed in a very formal garb. Her emerald dress was like a work of nature, which flaunted the wearer's clear white skin, with her round pure-white shoulders revealed. Her body was like a carefully crafted piece of ivory and at the same time like a piece of jade.

Actually, no. Nothing in nature could provide a description that would do her beauty justice.

Vyvyan wore an elegant smile. Her eyes were blue like the blue sea. She wore the elves' crown on her head, which resembled a group of chickens surrounding a phoenix.

They once said that Vyvyan's beauty radiated for hundreds of miles. Maybe I didn't feel that way since I was her son, but I could honestly now see Vyvyan's body glowing.

Everything beautiful was glowing. Vyvyan's beauty and grace were so great it was virtually impossible for one to look straight at her. Even the air itself seemingly stood still because of her beauty, leaving one with no way to breathe.

Elizabeth didn't wear a dress. I would consider Elizabeth very smart. She knew that she couldn't compare to Vyvyan, next to her in a dress, so she wore military attire.

Elizabeth isn't famous for her eloquence, but her imposing aura. Dressed in her military attire, it further emphasised her serious expression and incomparably imposing aura, leaving one with no way of looking into her eyes.

The ribbon and collar by her chest swayed gently as she moved. Her white cape swayed gently. Her boots, which had been cleaned to the point they were glistening, were a strong contrast to her long-black pants, while her glorious long-sword at her belt exuded the aura of an empress.

The two of them nearly made my two wives invisible.

They sure live up to their reputation as the two most beautiful women on the continent. One is beautiful, while the other is imposing. They stole all of the

limelight.

I looked at the two of them in a daze and felt an odd sense of jealousy for my father.

'You would've had to have saved the nation in your previous life to have one of them, and yet he had two?!"

'Damn, you deserved to die!! They're both my women now that you're dead. Man oh man, when I think about them fighting to the death over me back then, I feel an odd sense of glory...'

'Wait a second. Glory my ass! They're not my women! They're my moms! What am I jealous about?!"

'That was scary. That was freaking scary. It must be Vyvyan's fault. It must be her fault. She's the one feeding me weird thoughts every day which has caused my eyes to malfunction!'

"Onii-sama, while I know that Her Highness and Her Majesty are overly attractive, your wives will get jealous if you keep staring at the two of them." Freya softly whispered that into my ear and I came out of my mesmerised thoughts.

Vyvyan noticed my reaction, so she revealed a pleased smile and walked up to me. She gently played with her long blonde hair and then touched my face. She giggled softly and asked, "Son, is Mommy pretty?"

"Yes! For real! Ah!!"

'I'm sorry Lucia! I'm sorry! Don't step on my foot! Hey, don't stomp on my foot!'

Ch. 31

"Let's get ready to enter now then." Elizabeth and Vyvyan knocked Nier and Lucia aside with great chemistry and then grabbed one arm of mine each, scaring me to the point my legs went weak.

'What are these two trying to pull?! What are you two trying to do?! Let go of me! Let go of me! My wives are Nier and Lucia! Don't do this! You're my moms, not my wives!'

'Isn't this a banquet meant for me to announce my wives?! Did you two discuss this and then decide to steal me from them now?!"

'Why am I looking forward to it?! No! No! No! This isn't developing the way it's meant to! This isn't developing the way it's meant to! I'm here to make great efforts toward building a great state, not to hit on my moms! You're both already someone else's wife, so don't do this! I'm your son! Please don't spare me!'

'Wait, what?!"

... It looks like my brain has become a mess, with the two most beautiful women on the content hugging me on both sides. I don't even know how I got to the entrance of the venue.

The two of them dragged me here like they were playing with a wooden puppet.

"Son, it's a given that we have to enter before Lucia and Nier, as the empress and queen. It'll be their turn once it's time to speak." Elizabeth seemed to have read my thoughts. She stroked my head and, with a proud and melancholic tone, continued, "You really are becoming more and more like Inard... You sure are your father's child. You're so similar. Mommy is always by your side because when Mommy looks up quickly, Mommy will see you as your father for a split second."

Vyvyan pulled me over. She looked at Elizabeth and angrily remarked, "What

are you saying? My son is my son; Onii-sama is Onii-sama. Elizabeth, you're treating my son as Inard, aren't you? In that case, you're just treating him as an emotional substitute. My son is my most beloved and only son. I love Onii-sama, but I also love my son."

Elizabeth looked back at Vyvyan and sneered, "What? Is the noble Queen Vyvyan in love again? Do you love my son the same way you love Inard? Wow, you elves sure are something. You don't have feelings for my son, do you? You can't do that, Vyvyan. You're a woman of two minds."

"What's it got to do with you if I have feelings for my son or not? I gave birth to him. I'm the one who did everything for him, so it's only right that he likes me."

"He's my son! I gave birth to him! He should like me and not you!" Elizabeth fired back.

Talk and talk, and somehow they return to this topic. The temperature between them rose again. It was like the electricity between them was zapping each other.

'Hey, hey, hey, haven't you two gotten something wrong?! There's an issue with your reasoning! What do you mean I should like you because you gave birth to me?! That's a dangerous thought you two have! So what is the meaning behind you two holding me right now?! You two, pay attention to what you're doing! My wives are right behind! Nier and Lucia are watching you two, plus, Lucia is pregnant!'

"There's no need for me to fight you for him. We both know very well what my son is like. There will come a day where he will return to my side."

"Yes, you're right. You didn't do anything for my son when he was young, and yet you're acting like a mother now. I believe that my son will remember who held him, who kissed him, who gave him bliss and a youth!"

My moms didn't seem to be in such a good mood today... They were both smiling but at the same time, evidently not too happy.

'Luna has been ignoring me recently, as well. She doesn't want to say anything outside of work these days.'

'Freya gets angry for no reason these days.'

'What exactly did I do wrong...?'

'I'm definitely not admitting I'm a dense guy. I'm a smooth guy when it comes to love. But I honestly don't know what exactly I did wrong to make these few people angry with me.'

'I can understand Freya and Luna, but Vyvyan? Didn't she already get over it? Why is she still getting mad?!'

Vyvyan stroked my head affectionately, looked at Elizabeth and in a ridiculing tone said, "Let's go, Son. Let's head inside. It's a pity that not many elves came, so just put up with humanity's blessings coated in the stench of money."

"Blessings coated in money are better than the elves who aren't even giving their blessings. You elves keep rambling about how you're loyal to your ruler, yet aren't even willing to step outside for that ruler. Wow, so loyal."

Elizabeth stroked my head and then said to me, "It's alright. Mommy will give you Mommy's blessings, unlike someone else who claims to love you with every breath but didn't even get one person to come along."

"Tch." Vyvyan grumpily clicked her tongue.

The door then opened and we entered the venue so Vyvyan didn't fire back.

I can understand it. Elves can't handle cold climates after all. The imperial guards who came here were suffering on a daily basis, too. It wasn't very cold here, but they were still shivering. They wouldn't want to leave their warm rooms if there was no work.

So, it's not as though the elves don't want to give us their blessings, but rather that they couldn't leave the forest.

"Let's go, Son."

"Let's go, Son."

My two moms smiled and then wrapped their arms around mine. We then headed inside.

The magnificent hall was lit up by fires. The fires were placed strategically so

that every corner of the hall was lit up. On the pristine white table were jade stone and gold eating utensils.

The sumptuous dishes looked like they could cause the exquisite wooden table to collapse.

The ladies and gentlemen gathered there in formal clothing turned around and froze up at first when they saw these two most beautiful women. They then bowed with the utmost degree of respect.

"Welcome Elven Queen Vyvyan Galadriel! Rosvenor Empire's Empress Elizabeth Rosvenor! And welcome Rosvenor Empire's Prince, Elven Prince Troy Galadriel Rosvenor!"

There weren't any elves here so I could display my identity without concern. Like Luna, the elves would never believe that their prince is of mixed-blood, so I can't tell them that I'm the elven prince.

We went to the forefront of the hall.

I turned around and looked at the end of the red-carpet, where we had just entered, which was where Lucia and Nier were.

"Welcome His Majesty's wives, Lucia Galadriel Rosvenor and Nier Galadriel Rosvenor!"

The crowd exploded into gossip. Everyone was shocked to see Nier. As for Lucia, they didn't care for her since they just considered Lucia a beautiful elf. Nier, on the other hand, was different. The prince's wife had to stand out from the crowd, yet his wife was a Valkyrie.

As a Valkyrie who was always by the empress's side, Nier was already a well-known guard among the people. But now they found out she was actually the prince's wife.

Envy, jealousy, confusion, and puzzlement surrounded Nier.

Nier looked at her surroundings somewhat frightened. Her steps showed a slight sense of panic. She had never stood under the spotlight. She never had the attention of so many people on her. Her nervousness and fear weighed down on her so much she almost couldn't take a step.

"Don't be nervous." Lucia gently grabbed Nier's hand.

Nier looked at Lucia with surprise.

Lucia looked forward at His Highness's silhouette and softly said, "You are one of His Highness's wives. Your bewilderment is His Highness's bewilderment. Your confusion is His Highness's confusion. If you embarrass yourself here, you will embarrass His Highness, as well. I will not allow that to happen."

"Lucia... too..." Nier smiled and then adjusted her expression and spoke properly, "You too. Do not embarrass His Majesty here in front of humanity!"

Ch. 32

Nier basically became the star of the event.

Nier is a perfect example of a sparrow that turned into a phoenix overnight. As a Valkyrie who had yet to see the world, she had become a princess in the blink of an eye.

A group of ladies swiftly crowded over like men. 'Friendship drives power' is a saying that applies to females, too. Of course, what the ladies were after wasn't power but the glory and wealth that came with power.

Nier is indeed very pretty. Many guys revealed looks of shock and envy when she appeared. The young guys had just come out from under their father's shelter and yet to see the vast world. They were already utterly shocked at the sight of Nier.

Most surprising, though, was that everyone here could see the empress's true face.

I think it was because Vyvyan was present as well, and so she wanted to compete, thus choosing not to wear her face-veil.

Vyvyan was a little angry since I chose Elizabeth for the opening dance instead of her. But I couldn't help it since I promised Elizabeth. During our dance, I

could feel Vyvyan's dark and cold gaze trained on me. Boy, I was so scared my entire body shuddered.

I finally realised why Elizabeth made this request. And that was because choosing to dance the opening dance with Elizabeth was the equivalent of officially acknowledging that this was a dance with my mother. In other words, I was basically acknowledging Elizabeth as my mother.

When we spun in circles, I could see Elizabeth look at Vyvyan and sneer at her over and over again. Vyvyan gripped her goblet tightly like it was Elizabeth's neck.

'Please. Please stop provoking Vyvyan. It's a full-moon night tomorrow. If you keep provoking her, there's a fat chance she'll do the deed with me!'

After the opening dance, I was free to do as I please. I held a cup of wine and dealt with all the young people who came over to ingratiate themselves with me. It doesn't look like my two mothers are willing to come and rescue me this time.

Socialising is something I need to practice. I wore a fake smile and looked at the people around me.

'How am I supposed to know who you people are? How much your father did for the empress has nothing to do with me. I don't know your names!'

On another side, Lucia was surrounded by a curious group of humans. Even the females seemed to like petite and cute Lucia. They looked at Lucia and asked something. Lucia answered very politely.

In my mind, Lucia is a very easy going young girl. I've never seen her at any formal balls. But it looks like she's really polite. However, her small and cute face made her eloquence appear less than Vyvyan's. Instead, she looked a little cuter like a doll.

Lucia didn't choose wine. She chose a juice that was made specifically for her. However, it seems that someone with sharp eyes noticed something. It looked like they noticed Lucia was pregnant.

It was tough for Nier to be the centre of attention, because she was a Valkyrie. She had never attended balls... well, except with me. Though Nier

rushed to learn the mannerisms and whatnot in a short period of time, her expression was stiff, as usual. That expression, where she tried to smile but couldn't, was comedic.

Nier shot me gazes calling for help every now and then, but I was having trouble myself so I could only respond to her pleas with a hopeless smile.

"Miss Nier, may I dance with you?" A voice attracted my attention.

I saw the females surrounding Nier make way.

A tall and lean guy with a clean face stood before Nier with a smile and extended his hand out. He was indeed handsome, just like Castell, except without Castell's ridiculing smile and mature gaze. The guy was a playboy.

A dance? I'm alright with that. But Nier looked like she was caught by surprise. She lingered for a moment and then looked at his face.

He appeared to be very happy that Nier looked at him. He laughed aloud and then reached his hand out to grab Nier's shoulder. He said, "You sure are deserving of praise, princess. You are the most beautiful woman I have ever seen. If you could dance a dance with me, I would be sincerely grateful."

I saw violence creep into Nier's gaze. I prayed for the young man in my heart, hoping Nier knew where she was.

Nier's love for me is the extremely pure and morbid type of love. She thought of herself as my belonging and thus would not allow anyone to touch her.

"Remove your hand, you rude fellow." Nier grabbed his wrist. Her eyes revealed murderous intent and a cold aura.

The atmosphere around her appeared to turn cold in a split moment. The guy's smile went stiff on his face. Fear and terror crept into his expression.

Nier looked at him with a cold gaze.

I could virtually hear that guy's wrist crack.

She indifferently said, "Rude fellow, I am the princess. Am I someone that you can disrespect? Disrespecting me is disrespecting His Majesty. Do you want me to snap your wrist right now? Or would you like to bet our honour and duel to the death with me? I promise to make it swift and painless."

"N-No... I... I..."

"Alright, alright, Nier. Nier." I had to step up.

All the air in the entire hall was overflowing with Nier's murderous intent. Nier was truly angry. She actually did have a short sword attached to her thigh. It's not entirely impossible for her to draw it and cut his hand off.

Nier looked at me. She lingered for a moment before revealing a slightly scared look. She quivered as she apologised, "Sorry, Your Majesty... I... I couldn't stop myself..."

"It's alright." I stroked Nier's head.

I then looked at the guy holding his wrist and quaking. I made a small bow and said, "I'm very sorry about my wife hurting you. But brashly touching a lady is not what a gentleman should do, so I believe that you have no complaints either. Let us end this matter here. I shall have a drink with you. I wish you the best of health." I picked up a cup by the side and finished it in one shot.

The guy smiled. He drank a cup and then ran away pathetically.

The atmosphere slowly became lively again.

I let out a sigh of relief. I noticed both of my moms looking at me with gazes of approval, complimenting my actions. It looks like I handled it appropriately.

"Your Majesty..."

"It's okay, it's okay. I'm actually... very happy..." I smiled and took Nier's hands.

She giggled softly and then lowered her head shyly.

I looked at her and then at the balcony to the side. I suddenly felt a little nostalgic. For me personally, the most comfortable ball isn't one of those where everybody was around me, but the one where I was alone, with Nier, drinking on the balcony...

I'm much happier drinking good wine with a beauty to accompany me than being surrounded by people.

The same goes whether it's Nier or Lucia.

"What a tough woman... But I like that. I really like that! Getting stepped on by that kind of woman must feel amazing, huh? I really want her to stomp on me... But she's the princess... I can't believe she's the princess. I can't believe that god-damned piece of trash took her!"

"It's alright. Don't forget that if your father is successful, perhaps the prince will be no more..."

Ch. 33

"Nier?" Vyvyan moved her cup of wine around gently and did some thinking while watching the purple wine inside her cup swish around. A dubious smile crept up onto her face.

"It's because you're an elf. Nier is an ordinary human, while you're an elf internally. Your blood, sweat and saliva all contain mana while Nier is just an ordinary human. Therefore, it's not easy for you two to have children." She said.

"Then... I..."

"Mommy and Onii-sama brought you to life." Vyvyan stroked my head. She then smiled and continued, "Mommy has mana and so did Onii-sama, hence it was easy to get pregnant with you. We just needed the power of the moon."

Okay. Asking Mommy Vyvyan was pointless because she was never going to acknowledge that I was a mixed-blooded human and elf.

'She's not going to acknowledge that I'm Elizabeth's child. This is very strange then. If Nier couldn't get pregnant because of my mana, how was I created? Elizabeth was the one who gave birth to me.'

'Though both moms gave birth to me, Elizabeth gave birth to me the first time around. I grew up in Elizabeth's belly. Further, if we're arguing that I'm an elf, I'm a half-elf while my father is a full-blooded elf. It looks like I need to ask Elizabeth about this.'

"But if we're on this topic, Son, you must be mentally prepared." Vyvyan had a drink. She then looked at me and went on, "Lucia's mana level is very low. It is below the average elf's. Her father's mana isn't bad, but her mother is an ordinary maid, causing her mana to be low-level. So... you understand, right?"

"I know." I can understand. What Mom meant was simple. What she meant was that while my child with Lucia would be an elf, our child's mana wouldn't be of a very high level.

'It looks an elf's mana level is completely dependent on his or her parents.'

I touched my arm and asked, "What about my mana then...?"

Vyvyan stroked my head and replied with a smile, "Don't you know, Son? Your mana can't be used, but it is also considered super-high level because you're my son. How could your mana be weak when combining Onii-sama's blood and mine?"

'It must be because time was turned back, right? Otherwise, my mana wouldn't be any good, even if Vyvyan and Elizabeth gave birth to me. I am a half-elf, after all. However, I absorbed Vyvyan's mana, when time was reversed and I was inside Vyvyan, which is why my mana is of super-high calibre.'

"Normally speaking, you and Lucia wouldn't receive the blessings of your families, my son." Vyvyan looked at me and continued in a serious manner, "Bloodlines are extremely important to the elven imperial family."

"You were accepted by the tribe because you have a lot of mana. However, if your child's mana is average, then, it will be impossible for your child to be acknowledged. Mommy let you get married to Lucia because you truly love Lucia."

"But... aren't you the only member of the Galadriel tribe now, Mom?"

"No. Your grandpa and grandma are both still around. They've just moved into the forest to live in seclusion, after passing on the throne. Mommy kept your matters under wraps and never told them." Mom winked at me with a giggled and continued, "If Mommy didn't hide it, and they saw their granddaughter-in-law's mana, Mommy would have to temporarily transfer some of Mommy's mana to Lucia. Lucia would suffer immense pain if Mommy

did that.”

“Think about it, If this cup of wine can only hold this much wine and then you forcefully poured more into it without letting it out, how would that feel? The same logic applies here.”

I was speechless. If that was the case, then Vyvyan has done a lot for the sake of allowing us to be together. Though Mom’s yandere tendencies almost caused me to lose myself, she has done a lot for my happiness. I felt more grateful to Vyvyan now.

“And so, Son, you need to be prepared to not receive blessings if you and Lucia have this child. You can be the next king, but your child definitely cannot be.” Vyvyan placed her cup of wine down.

She looked at me, with some curiosity and continued. “Of course, Mommy can check your child’s mana now. Your child with Lucia has mana that isn’t too stable. If your child is lucky, it will be a high-level magician. If unlucky, your child really will just be an ordinary elf.”

“If Mommy finds the child to be an ordinary elf, Mommy can kill the child, now, before the child takes shape. Otherwise, Mommy imagines you don’t want your child to have berserk mana either, right?”

I lingered for a moment, then turned my head around to look at Lucia smiling in the crowd. After a moment of silence, I replied, “It’s alright, Mom. No matter what happens, I won’t let Lucia lose this child. I mean, our child. Our first child. I won’t abandon our child no matter what. If I have a child just for the sake of bloodlines and mana, then I will have betrayed my love for Lucia.”

Mom smiled helplessly and then stroked my head. She let out a long sigh and replied, “Onii-sama was the same back then. I can’t say this is foolish, but I don’t consider this to be wise. You two have only considered yourselves and not us. You two need love, while the nation needs a successor. You have given us up for your love, while we will be the target of cursing and carry ill-fame because of that. Who will be the one to explain all that?”

Mom wasn’t wrong. As a matter of fact, it wouldn’t be wrong for Mom to refuse to allow Lucia and I to be with each other since we have different standpoints. What I pursue is this so-called love, while Mom and everyone else

needs a suitable successor.

Fighting for love will always earn the scrutiny of the people, while elders will make you out to be bad people. However, the people don't have to deal with the imperial family's headaches. They don't have to fret over the successor, but the imperial family does.

A successor from the imperial family who pursues the love of commoners is truly pitiable. It's not that it's wrong for them to pursue their love. They're just pitiable, that's all.

"Of course, Mommy has a more appropriate method to help you." Vyvyan put down the cup of wine, which she had finished.

She looked like she was struggling to balance, so I quickly stepped over to help her.

Mom found her balance and revealed a mischievous smile as she looked at me.

'Though Mom's smile is really beautiful, why does it always send chills up my spine, as if I'm the prey a lion has set its sights on?'

"What method?" I had an indistinct idea that wasn't too good... but I still ended up asking...

"Of course that would be to have a child with Mommy." Mom pinched my chin.

She looked at me with her intoxicated eyes filled with eroticism. She giggled softly and added, "That way, you can be with Lucia, and I can tell your father I have fulfilled my role. If two people with ultra-superior mana have a child, then their offspring will definitely possess ultra-superior mana. That's two birds with one stone."

"What?! Mom!! That's... that's!!"

"Hehe, I was just joking, Son."

Vyvyan stroked my head with a smile and then turned around to pick up a plate on the side.

I looked at Mom's silhouette absentmindedly. Her huge knockers kept my

attention, so my brain hadn't recovered yet.

'Mom did say herself that she was joking, but why is there an immense sense of terror gripping my heart...? Was Mom... really just joking? ... I'd buy it if it came out of Elizabeth's mouth, but this is Vyvyan we're talking about here!!'

'The scariest part is...'

'It's a full-moon night tomorrow...'

Ch. 34

Based on what I've put together from what Elizabeth and Vyvyan told me, I came to a conclusion. And that was that it was relatively hard for a human and elf to have a child. Though both take the form of a person, they were two different beings. It was hard, but not impossible.

In summary, it's like trying to draw a super-ultra rare card. It was a matter of luck.

"Your Majesty. Your Majesty."

Just as I left, after speaking with Elizabeth, someone called my name and walked over.

I turned around to look at the individual. They looked obviously different to those I'd seen. Though this is a different world, it appeared that the development of organisms was pretty similar.

The individual with a high nose and faint blonde hair clearly came from a cold place. The individual didn't look like someone from the south.

'He must be a foreign guest, I presume. The empress didn't bring any foreigners along, though.'

As this is my city, Mom wouldn't invite someone here; hence, I was curious about this person, who was dressed differently to what I was used to seeing.

The individual gave off the vibe that he was from a different city.

I nodded while looking at me and greeted him, “Hello.”

“Hello, Your Majesty. I have heard of your great name. It is a great honour to meet you, for the first time, today. I am the envoy sent here from Socina City. I came here to send you an obituary and was honoured to receive an invitation to attend the ball by Her Majesty. Please allow me to congratulate you on behalf of all the people of Socina on marrying such beautiful wives.”

His tone was neither obsequious nor arrogant. He didn’t sound like he was trying to ingratiate himself with me in an obvious fashion like the others. However, his congratulation was indeed sincere. His attitude and casual tone gave me a good impression of him.

He made a small bow then raised his head up and continued, “As your wedding collides with the funeral of our previous lord, I would like to ask that you forgive our new lord, Lord Karana Dominique Von Testersmill, for being unable to make it.”

‘The hell? The hell? The hell? What was your lord’s name again? Your lord’s name sure is long. Surely she wasn’t allowed to come when she registered because it was too long. You’re making this awkward for me, man. Logically speaking, I should be showing my respect right now, but you’re speaking with a foreign accent and with such a long name. I can’t make out what her name is.’

“It’s alright. Don’t mind it. Thank you for your blessings.” I waved my hand.

‘It doesn’t matter if she doesn’t come since I can’t even write her invitation. Can’t she just choose a name to get by with? Why does she have to go with such a long name? What sort of chuunibyou name is that? What should I call her? Karana or Testersmill?’

“Then with regards to our city’s matter...”

“You have to go and ask Her Majesty about that.” I smiled helplessly and cut him off, “I’m just a prince. I don’t have any right to help you. If you have a problem, please go and discuss it with Her Majesty directly. I will not involve myself in your internal affairs. As long as the power balance is maintained, all is well. If there is anything in your city hiding in the dark, which threatens your existence, then I shall help you.”

"I shall remember your words, Your Majesty." He nodded, but I felt like I had just got dragged into something.

'Have I just become a tank, out of the blue?'

After bidding farewell to the envoy, I felt the smell of wine in the air become more prominent. Previously, the smell of power and money was dominant. This ball is but just an interaction between power and money.

They're pretty much done with it, now. All those who tried to curry favour with Nier were scared off, and I'm going to be living virtually in seclusion, here. I remember what Castell told me very well. If I don't want to show that I'm forming parties, then do not say one more word to either side or stay one second longer with either side. Otherwise, I'll definitely become targeted.

I walked up to Lucia's side and watched her silently eating stuff. I patted her on her shoulder and softly said, "Lucia, how are you feeling? If you're tired, head back and rest now."

Lucia looked at me, giggled softly, and replied, "I'm alright. I'm not very tired."

"Don't push yourself, Lucia. There's no reason to act tough for this."

"I'm not, Your Highness. I know that I can't force myself." Lucia rubbed her belly. She couldn't hold back her smile of bliss. She softly said, "It looks like our child behaves very well. Our child behaved the entire night because our child knows that Mommy and Daddy have work."

I smiled helplessly. I don't think our child has that much awareness yet. According to what Vyvyan told me, our child still hasn't taken shape.

However, seeing Lucia look so lively, she must be very happy tonight, I guess. And, though she doesn't usually have much of an appetite, she's eaten quite a bit tonight.

I'm quite happy about that.

"O~nii-~sa~ma!" While I was speaking to Lucia, a playful voice came from behind.

Before I could turn around to look, my lower back was attacked. My body tilted and almost smashed into the plate of soup in front of me.

Lucia shrieked and then looked at Freya, who had leapt at me from behind, with surprise.

“Freya!” I rubbed my back and called out.

If you had leapt at me like this before I got together with Nier, I would've only wobbled. But Nier has sapped me of all my strength, now. You almost snapped my back!’

I massaged my lower back but Freya didn’t release me. She hugged me around my lower back and kept calling ‘Onii-sama’ like she was singing a song.

‘She must be drunk...’

Lucia pulled Freya off, partly out of jealousy and partly due to concern.

But just as she was about to pull Freya off me, Freya hugged me tighter.

“No. I don’t want to leave Onii-sama. Onii-sama is the best brother. I don’t want to leave Onii-sama! I like Onii-sama! I don’t want to leave! Let go! Let go!” She exclaimed.

‘Say no more! Shut up! Nier won’t get jealous if she hears you, but this is Lucia here!! And it’s pregnant-Lucia!’

Freya looked at me with an extremely frightening gaze.

I quickly pulled Freya off and said, “Freya! Freya! I’m right here... Don’t tell me you drank alcohol...”

“Eh... I just drank a little... whatever... It doesn’t matter... Why is my body floating? ... Onii-sama, I’m very tired every day, too, but you only spend time with Miss Lucia and Miss Nier. You don’t even ask how Miss Luna and I are doing. I’m so mad. I want you to carry me into bed today, too, Onii-sama. I want to sleep in Onii-sama’s arms, too!”

“Your Highness?” Lucia’s gaze was getting scarier by the minute.

I was about to break out in a cold sweat from fear.

‘My goodness, don’t drink when you’re not old enough to yet, woman. Drinking alcohol aside, you suck at holding your liquor. Don’t start a ruckus here, now. I don’t care about the guests so much, but I’m worried about Lucia!’

'That's what I'm scared about!'

"Nier! Nier! Hurry and help me take Freya back. She's drunk..."

"Oh? Is that so? ... It looks like the child really likes you, too, Your Majesty. How about you go with the flow? Isn't that what our playboy-prince likes most?" Nier looked at me coldly too. Nier seemed to revert back to the Nier I first knew...

'What are you two even jealous about...? Please. Spare me...'

Ch. 35

"Onii-sama, the Earth Dragons you asked for have arrived at the city entrance. They were not brought into the city to ensure safety in the streets. Please head outside of the city. It is cold outside so you must wear more clothing." Freya woke me up the next day when it still wasn't very bright outside...

To be honest, the scene with Nier and I right now isn't suitable for children. But Freya has gotten used to it now so she didn't say anything.

I massaged my head and sat up. I pulled Nier, who was lying on my chest, off and carefully lay her aside. I then covered Nier up completely with the blanket so that she wouldn't catch a cold.

I didn't drink much alcohol last night. Freya, on the other hand, was plastered. She nearly got into a tussle with Nier.

If it wasn't for Lucia desperately dragging Freya away, Nier, who was absolutely fuming, would've drawn her sword.

Not only did Freya cling to me and refuse to let go, she even mocked Nier and Lucia, who had no comebacks at all.

Freya resembled my main wife instead of them.

"Good morning, Freya. Looks like you're sober now."

"Please do not mention what happened, Onii-sama. Let us both forget last

night, thank you very much, Onii-sama. Let us not mention last night's incident again." Freya cut me off resolutely and looked at me with pleading eyes.

'It looks like she really doesn't want me to bring up last night's incident again...'

For the serious and strict Freya before me right now, last night was a shameful memory. A very shameful memory.

I smiled helplessly and said, "I actually thought the Freya last night was really cute..."

"Oh?" Freya didn't react with surprise as I thought she would.

Instead, she looked at me with an interested expression. She smiled mischievously and then clung to my arm. She then immediately reached for my sensitive spot, causing me to jerk my body away from fright.

Behind me was a sleeping Nier. Nier doesn't really sleep deep. She possessed very strong vigilance, as a Valkyrie. She only slept deeply when I was by her side.

'If I called her now, I could guarantee she'll wake up for sure. And if Nier woke up to this scene, she'd hack me to death, wouldn't she...?'

"Freya!?"

"Is this what you meant by cute, Onii-sama? Did you want me to become a normal, stupid sister, who clings to her brother and keeps calling him 'Onii-chan'? Or... do you like experiencing this sort of forbidden love? I personally don't mind." Freya giggled mischievously as she clung to my arm. She continued, "Of course, if you want me to be like that, I can transform into that type of sister, you know? But then, who will you rely on, Onii-sama? When you are able to stand on your own, I will naturally become that sort of sister. When that time comes, you can do anything you want..."

"Don't do this... Freya..."

Freya and Luna have something in common, and that is that they're both very skilled in teasing people.

I clenched my teeth tightly. My legs started to shake a little.

Freya giggled and then hopped to a side. She then made a small bow and said, "Let us go then, Onii-sama. Please forget what happened last night. Otherwise, there will be a punishment~."

Before I could reply, Nier gently snorted.

'Man, I was so frightened I nearly got down on my knees. Did Freya plan this?! She hopped off as soon as Nier opened her eyes!'

"Dear... where are you going?" Nier rubbed her eyes and sat up causing the blanket on her to slip off.

I looked at Nier's nude body. I was still feeling it since Freya had just teased me... I swiftly turned around, picked up my cape and replied, "Nothing. I'm going to go and receive some goods. Keep sleeping, Nier. I'll be back soon for breakfast."

"Alright then, dear. Stay safe." Nier nodded and then lied back down. She must not be feeling so well after drinking last night.

Freya, who stood to the side, chuckled like a devil.

The sight of her chuckling made my hairs stand up. I warned myself not to try and tease Freya in the future, no matter what.

My plan is to have two armies.

One of them is the human guards who are learning swordsmanship and archery under Nier's tutelage.

The other one I want is a heavily armoured elven cavalry unit.

Though elves aren't skilled equestrians, I didn't intend to transform them into a heavily-armoured cavalry unit. The elves have a better option, and that is Earth Dragons.

I remember the ferocity of the Earth Dragons charging at us back then like it was yesterday.

'I don't know where I got the courage and fire from to not turn tail back then. Normally speaking, seeing a horde of Earth Dragons charging at you causing even the Earth to tremble would cause one to flee. That's just an instinctive reaction.'

Hence why I wanted a cavalry unit which rides Earth Dragons. Why choose elves? Because Earth Dragons were magical creatures. I thought that it was more appropriate to give magical creatures to elves than humans. As you couldn't pierce Earth Dragons with blades, we just needed to create armour which can guard against ballistae. The Earth Dragons would charge the enemies and open a path.

The human cavalry, equipped with guns that can fire repeatedly and long-swords, would then charge into the space opened. They would scatter the enemy groups with firepower, before chasing them down with their swords to slaughter them.

Now that was a perfect tactic. Of course, if I had cannons as well, that would be even better. It was just that we couldn't form a cannon unit in our small city. I still didn't have Mom's level of power so I couldn't form an army.

The elven imperial guards Mommy Vyvyan brought over were outstanding soldiers. As long as they could ride Earth Dragons and trained a little more, they'd have combat power.

Moreover, the Earth Dragon cavalry unit wouldn't need to get into close-quarters combat with their enemies. They just needed to keep charging into their enemies over and over. Those who truly needed to train are those in the unit that needed to charge into and slay the enemy army.

I walked up to the side of the Earth Dragons.

Honestly, the Earth Dragons have left me with a trauma. I don't know if it's Troy's fear or not, but when I looked into their eyes, my body trembled on its own.

These herbivorous creatures, which look docile, were very frightening when they went wild.

However, Freya didn't even react. She instead scanned the horde of Earth Dragons with interest and asked me if she could touch them.

"Your Majesty, the Earth Dragons you asked for are all here." The head merchant wiped his forehead of sweat.

'It looks like it was very tough for him to transport the Earth Dragons.' I

nodded.

'This group of Earth Dragons shouldn't be bad, right...? I can't tell. But judging from their physiques and gazes, they don't look bad. They should be tough Earth Dragons, right?'

'An Earth Dragon can run much faster than a horse. They're like a rhinoceros. Would you not be afraid if a horde of rhinoceros charged at you, and you only a short-sword in hand? It's a bit of a waste for there to be only one rider per Earth Dragon. Let's see if I can use a set-up like that used with armoured elephants. That would allow another elf to toss magical potions at the enemies or fire arrows at the enemies.'

"Very good. Thank you. This is your payment. Keep it safe."

I handed him a bag of gold coins. Once he counted them to ensure it was the correct amount, he gave a deep bow and then rode his horse off.

The guards standing around the Earth Dragons didn't know what to do.

However, I don't intend to train the Earth Dragon cavalry unit here, because elves can't stay in humanity's lands for too long. I need Mommy Vyvyan to transport this group of Earth Dragons to the elven lands.

'If they train here... uhm... That means I need to go and see Mommy Vyvyan... Uhm... After Mommy Vyvyan made a suggestion that could destroy all morals in the world... I'm somewhat scared of her...'

'But the most dangerous part is... tonight is a full-moon night...'

Ch. 36

"It's done now. Mommy has infused mana into these three pools: Explosion, Ignite and Vicious Venom. You just need to throw the projectiles you produce into it."

"Mm... Mom..."

"It's nothing. You don't have to thank me, Son. Also, about the Earth Dragon cavalry you mentioned; There won't be any problems. Leave it to Mommy. Mommy will ensure that you have skilled Earth Dragon riders for when you need them. Let's see if there's anything else Mommy can help you with. Ah, that's it. You don't have to use the swords made by humanity for your guard unit, Son. The imperial guards' weapons Mommy provided for you are definitely far superior to the swords produced by humanity."

"Uhm... Thank you, Mom... But..."

Vyvyan cheerfully hugged me around my neck and rested her head on my shoulder. She blissfully said, "It's okay. It's okay. You don't have to thank me, Son. You're Mommy's son, so it's only natural for Mommy to support your career. This is what Mommy should do!"

She was as happy as if her crush had asked her to do something and she completed it excellently...

'But I'm not Mom's crush. I'm her son! I'm just her son!'

But that's not the important thing here. I've been Vyvyan's son for so long that I've become used to her gestures. That said, I have something extremely important I want to discuss with Vyvyan, and that is...

"Mom, can you get down first...? We're about to arrive at the palace... It won't be good if Mommy Elizabeth sees us like this, don't you think...?"

"I don't care about her." Grumpy, Vyvyan hugged me around my neck tighter.

She leaned on my chest, frowned a little and said, "Mommy poured Mommy's mana into the pools. Mommy is extremely weak right now, so you should carry Mommy, as Mommy's son. Back then, Mommy carried you when you were powerless and ran around."

I looked at Mom with suspicion. Mom's expression and body are the same as usual.

'I know that transferring mana or using magic will drain you, but you're a demigod! Didn't you say it was easy for you to obliterate the entire continent?! You only poured mana into three pools the size of fish-tanks and you've become this weak?! Today is a full-moon night, too! Why is it that I don't believe you in

the least?!

'I truly don't believe you!'

'But it doesn't look like Vyvyan is going to get off. Instead, she's just going to snuggle up in my arms with her arms wrapped around my neck as we sit atop the horse. Normally speaking, no one is allowed to sit on the prince's horse. But his moms and wives can, right...? Vyvyan is the queen of the elves, too...'

'But is it a good idea for you to be leaning in my arms like a little bird on top of my horse like this when you're the elven queen?! You're my Mom, not my wife! People will think you're my mistress, won't they...? Wait, no. A mistress wouldn't be allowed to sit on my horse.'

I was now headed to my palace. However, I was growing more and more worried; like the feeling you would have as you walked to the guillotine, step by step. Nothing will happen if I carry Vyvyan like this. Freya won't mind how many women I have around me, but... but...

'If Elizabeth sees us, I bet there will be another full-scale war...'

"Ah... Son... Hmm..."

'Sorry. I'm sorry. I was wrong. I'm truly sorry. I shouldn't have triggered a flag for myself.'

Just as I got to the palace gates, I saw the empress ride her horse out.

Elizabeth revealed a happy smile and greeted me at first. But then, when she saw Vyvyan in my arms with a gentle expression, her expression changed for the worst, instantly. It was like she saw her father's killer.

Her hateful gaze made me feel like she wanted to rip Vyvyan apart.

"Why are you here?"

"Why, of course, it's because my son needs me."

Vyvyan looked at Elizabeth with a strange smile. She pressed her hands on my chest and continued with a smile, "My son is still my son after all. He needs his Mommy to take care of him. I can't help it since I'm his mom. This is just natural."

Elizabeth pursed her lips sideways. She then looked at her and indifferently said, “I can understand you helping my son, but aren’t you too intimate with my son? You really are being ambiguous. You’re not the ‘you’ from back then. Why are you so intimate with him when you’re almost a hundred, now? Do you think you’re my son’s mistress? You have no manners. Is my son someone you can approach whenever you want? If you have even an ounce of shame left, get away from my son!”

Elizabeth’s gaze fired up before she even finished speaking. She had drawn the sword at her waist and cut an icicle to pieces that disappeared into the ground before I realised it.

Vyvyan looked back at her coldly and said, “Isn’t that the same for you? Old almost-forty Elizabeth? What are you trying to say? He’s not just your son. He’s my son. What’s it to you if I’m a little intimate with my son?”

Elizabeth waved her sword and all of the Valkyries behind her drew their swords.

I was shocked when Vyvyan joined in as well.

‘Isn’t she basically slapping the empress in the face by being so violent in humanity’s lands? However... Vyvyan’s seems to be a little particularly excited on full-moon nights...’

Snuggled up in my arms, Vyvyan said, “Have your people sheath their swords. Otherwise, I don’t think they’ll be sufficient for my warm-up. And this is our business. Do you want to bring others into it?”

Elizabeth waved her hand and the Valkyries behind her sheathed their swords. Elizabeth looked at her indifferently and then said, “Ah, right. Today is a full moon. It looks like you really need to let it out. But my son is not where you should be releasing your sexual lust. If you need to let it out, come and fight me.”

“Yeah?” Vyvyan twisted her body atop the horse. She then looked at Elizabeth in a teasing way and said, “You must know that it’s a full moon tonight. It’s my night with my son. It’s none of your business.”

“I’m warning you. If you dare use the full-moon night as an excuse to do

something that crosses the line with my son, I'll take your head on the spot." Elizabeth has never been so serious before that she would even change the way she referred to herself.

She looked at Vyvyan coldly, with her sword in hand, like a wolf about to dig into its meal. Actually, she was more like a wolf that was fighting for the role of king of the pack.

Vyvyan chuckled coldly as she looked at her. She waved her hand and then responded, "Unfortunately, you might not get the chance tonight. Elizabeth, in the past, until now, and in the future, only I can protect my son. Only I can. You have no business butting in. Won't you admit that?!"

"Think about it. Who was the one that caused my son to become like this?! Let me repeat myself. If you dare to cross the line with my son, you won't live to see tomorrow."

"Try me. Nothing I do to my son is considered crossing the line."

Vyvyan and Elizabeth glared at each other as though the peace they forcefully tried to maintain had completely vanished on this most tense day...

Glossary

Elizabeth has never been so serious before that she would even change the way she referred to herself. – This line refers to how in Chinese, there are a bazillion ways of referring to yourself, but in English, we just use "I". She usually uses the version emperors use to refer to themselves, but this time, she used the commonly used "I". In other words, usually 朕 became 我.

Ch. 37

'I can't shake off the feeling that something bad is going to happen tonight...'

It's another full moon night tonight. This is an important date every month for me, especially this time.

That's because my body currently lacks mana, so I feel very sick today. I started feeling powerless before it was even dark outside.

Vyvyan had stayed by my side all day today. Though I could move my limbs normally, it was mainly to guarantee I would be okay.

But even if I was in a normal condition, my two mothers would still be extremely tense on a full moon night. They don't want to see me in so much pain. The way they express their pain differs, though.

Elizabeth stays by my side and watches over me until I fall asleep, but Vyvyan...

Though Vyvyan's method allows me to recover, Vyvyan seems to have not done that in a long time. As for Luna... Luna and Vyvyan are different. I can accept Luna's method of treating me in humanity's lands, but I can't accept Vyvyan doing the same.

I lay on the bed and looked at the two staring at me. I smiled helplessly as I resisted the pain and said, "Mom... you're making me feel weird... looking at me like that..."

Elizabeth held my hand, looked at me with pity and said, "Son, it's alright. It's alright. You don't have to worry. Mommy is right here with you. Mommy won't let this woman do anything to you. Mommy definitely won't let her do anything that crosses the line. Don't worry. Don't worry."

Because the queen and empress were both present Nier and Lucia couldn't sit down, therefore, they could only stand to one side and watch me. However, that made me feel really weird... it was like I was a dying person looking at the people standing around. I really hate this feeling.

Maybe others won't share the same sentiment, but I hate it. For me who's gone through death once, even though I've forgotten about Zhu Liangzhe, the loneliness and fear of death in my subconscious still makes me really scared.

I guess it's a trauma to me.

I believe it would be the same for Troy. If he was still alive, he must be very scared of death, too.

Having died once, I'm not afraid of death itself, but the loneliness and powerlessness of death; that feeling of having only your thoughts intact.

When I first came here, I didn't have any experience with full moon nights. Back then, my only source of fear and panic was Vyvyan holding me.

But now I had Elizabeth, Vyvyan, Nier, Lucia, Luna and Freya by my side.

'I've got countless people by my side now. I have countless people who love me. I've gone through lots after coming here, many things of which I've never experienced before.'

'Though I had to do a lot, I don't regret it. Or rather, the life here has made me happier.' I slowly closed my eyes.

The pain I felt today made me feel even worse, so Vyvyan prepared sleeping medication for me beforehand. I really felt like I was dying now.

The moon gradually rose, and second after second went by, indicating that the old and traditional moon was rising. For the elves, it meant their hunting, and procreation powers were starting to increase.

My eyes were now shut.

'I don't have to worry, with so many people who love me by my side.'

"Alright, get started, Vyvyan." Elizabeth stood up and drew her sword as she watched her son close his eyes.

Vyvyan scanned her. She looked at the sword Elizabeth held and sneered at her, "The weapon in your hand is Onii-sama's sword. Are you going to use Onii-sama's sword against me? And against me in my state on a full moon night?"

"I'm not picking on you." Elizabeth looked at her and then went on, "Vyvyan, I really like you, honestly. I truly really like you. But you must know that this is my child. I only have this one child. He's my child. I shall never allow you to do anything funny to him. I'm willing to give up everything for him, including our friendship."

Vyvyan laughed indifferently. She stood up too, looked at her and responded, "This is my child. He's my child. I raised him."

"Whatever the case, remember," Elizabeth didn't shift her sword away. It was

still trained on Vyvyan. She continued, “Do not do anything to my son. I know your current condition. I know your eyes are turning red. Don’t do anything to my son, understand?”

“If you could kill me, I wouldn’t do anything.” Vyvyan looked at me. She wore on a cold smile and placed her hand on her child’s chest. She added, “But you must understand that I’m not doing this for you, but for my son.”

“Start then.”

The two of them stared at each other for a long time before Elizabeth took back her sword and Vyvyan sat on the bed.

Elizabeth placed her hand on her child’s belt then let out a heavy sigh and asked, “You are only to use your mouth, and no other methods, understood?”

“Hmm?!” Vyvyan was shocked as she looked at Elizabeth.

Elizabeth froze for a moment. She then looked at Vyvyan with a much colder gaze and stood back up.

“Don’t tell me you did something else when he was in the elven lands!! Did you do something else to my son?! This should be just a treatment, but did you do something else?!” She asked.

“No.” Vyvyan went silent for a moment and then giggled softly.

Elizabeth looked at her smile in silence for a moment before exclaiming, “I certainly hope you didn’t, Vyvyan. If you do anything to my son, you better prepare for a second war. I will not hand my son to a horny slut like you!”

“Yeah? Doesn’t the same go for you? Isn’t my son becoming more and more like Onii-sama? You, who always loved Onii-sama, will also develop feelings for my son, who looks like Onii-sama and inherited his bloodline. Plus, they should have the same scent, no?” Vyvyan narrowed her eyes and then continued, “You lived in the elven lands for two years so you can smell the scent of an elf, right?”

Elizabeth looked at her without answering. She looked at the prince on the bed and thought to herself in silence. A moment later, she placed her sword down and weakly said, “You yack too much... This child... this child... is becoming

more and more like my husband... he's becoming more and more similar... he's becoming more and more like the man I loved most..."

"Yeah?" Vyvyan took off her dress and her blood-red eyes were visible in the night sky. She mounted her son's body and then undid the belt on his pants.

She seductively licked her lips and said, "Since you were all like this in the past, I won't stand on ceremony... He is my son, after all. If I need a suitable successor, then... Then I may need to trouble my son..."

Ch. 38

When I woke up the next day, I saw Mom sleeping soundly next to me.

Elizabeth held my hand at one side and was sleeping soundly. On the other side were Lucia and Nier, who were also asleep.

'Though I don't feel as if there's any problem with the two of them being asleep, why are Luna and Freya asleep as well? And why do they look sprawled out on the ground, as if they got knocked out by someone?'

But mentally, I felt very clear-minded, as if I had just recovered from a long term illness. I rarely felt this way, as I was normally in pain after a full moon. I usually felt a little weak and sick after Vyvyan had sucked my mana out, but I didn't feel any of those symptoms today.

'I wonder if Vyvyan adjusted my mana as well, last night.'

However, Vyvyan wasn't around, and I didn't know where she'd gone off to.

I touched my body. My body wasn't messy, and even my clothes were fine.

I smiled helplessly. *'It looks like I was over-concerned about Vyvyan. Not even Vyvyan would do something while Elizabeth and so many others are around watching. I'm relieved. It looks like what Mom said won't happen to me. But regardless, Mom still has her rationality intact. Perhaps Mom was just joking that time. I blamed Mom unjustly.'*

Maybe that's how it was. I didn't consider the problem seriously, at the time.

I watched Lucia, deep asleep, and thought about it.

'Lucia's child will be my successor. As elves are a race that views bloodlines with great significance, his mana will determine if he can become the next king or not. Vyvyan is heavily supported by the people, not because of her figure, but because of her irrefutably powerful magic.'

'Realistically, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that Vyvyan was the most talented of the Galadriel tribe. More precisely, Vyvyan is the Galadriel's greatest magical tool, which they spent hundreds of years to create. Dark elves used all sorts of filthy methods to collect magic. Some were cursed, but Vyvyan soared. As a demigod, she is in no way different to a god other than not being able to create elements.'

I looked at my hands and recalled my powerful destructive power.

I easily destroyed a forest and lake; so, Vyvyan, whose mana is boosted on full moon nights, would easily be able to destroy the continent. As long as she had the time to collect the elements.

Elves don't have heirs who fight for the throne. They didn't have dukes, princes, and the sort revolting. Mana was everything.

'I wonder what my child with Lucia will be like, then.'

'My mana is of a super-high level. If we were to rank it in order, it would be super-ultra grade. Even though I can't use it, I still have volume. Lucia is just C-grade. If we're lucky, our child will be A-grade, but if our child is a B-grade, he would be an ordinary elf.'

'Such a descendant won't qualify. He would have no way of becoming king. He won't be acknowledged, as soon as he's born.'

'Even if he grows up under the protection of Vyvyan, Lucia and I, he would still have to ascend the throne, in the end. We're knowingly making him suffer through pain in the future. Would that be fair to the child? Aren't we sending an innocent to the abyss of despair, just for the sake of our love?'

'Am I doing the right thing?'

'But, I definitely cannot accept Vyvyan's proposal. I do really like Vyvyan. No, my love for her is the son loving his mother type, without any lust. I did have such feelings before, but I'm getting more and more into Troy's identity now. I've gradually come to see Vyvyan as my mother and not as my lover or a woman I like.'

'I will not use a substitute. But it looks like my only choice is to pray. Pray that our child can be happy. If this child can't reach the standard of a successor, I will have to entrust our hopes to our next child. Lucia and I can have another child that will be a successor with enough mana.'

'My child with Nier will be pure-human, while my child with Lucia will be an elf. Such a strange bloodline theory only exists in this world.'

'But... where did Vyvyan go off to?'

Just as I wondered that, Vyvyan pushed the door open and brought a tray in. When she spotted me sitting up, she smiled and asked, "How are you, Son? Are you feeling better?"

"I'm well. Thank you, Mom."

"It's fine, it's fine. Mommy is your Mommy after all. Mommy should take care of you." Mom sat on the edge of the bed and affectionately stroked my head.

She placed the tray to one side. She said, "Have some breakfast, Son. Full moon nights can have a negative impact on your health. Your mana has just stabilised today. Son, though the mana in your body has re-stabilised, you must not use magic again. Son, you must remember not to use magic. You can use the necklace to call for me at any time, but do not use magic yourself. Mommy isn't joking."

Seeing Mom's serious expression, I nodded and then picked up a fruit. I replied, "Alright, Mom. I won't make you worry."

"Good."

Vyvyan stroked my head. Her smile, under the light of the early morning sun, was brimming with a golden light. It was warmer and more captivating than the sun outside...

I silently ate a simple breakfast, like I do when I'm in the elven lands...

'No... Something feels wrong...'

'I know what it is, now! It's because it's too harmonious! It's too harmonious! Isn't it too harmonious?! Next to me is a sleeping Elizabeth, Nier, Lucia, Luna and Freya! Nier and Elizabeth are easily awoken, too. Why are they still sleeping calmly and not waking up?!" My heart sunk.

When I saw Vyvyan's blissful and warm smile, my entire body virtually felt like it was dunked into water.

'Maybe last night... Maybe last night... maybe last night... maybe that did end up happening last night?! Did it happen or not?! What has Vyvyan done to them?!"

"Mom... why... are they not waking up?" I asked her the question.

Vyvyan dawdled for a moment, then revealed a smile. She made a "shh" hand gesture and answered, "Maybe they're too tired. Let's not wake them up, Son."

'Are they truly too tired?! Is that true?! Why won't my mind let me feel convinced?! Why do I think that you're lying to me?! You're lying to me, aren't you?! What... what did you do to me when I wasn't conscious last night?! What exactly did you do to me?!"

'But I'm confident that Vyvyan won't answer me even if I ask. If they don't remember either... What happened on this last full moon night became a mystery along with the night after the trip to the hot-springs..."'

'What on Earth happened?!"

Ch. 39

The forests of the elves weren't just trees, leaves and whatnot, but also a collection of mana.

God bestowed his creation with mana and infused spring water with it, which

is the elven holy spring. The source of elven mana comes from the water derived from that gurgling spring.

The Galadriel tribe acquired the rights to rule the spring, as they defeated the other elves.

There are countless magical creatures inside the inner sections of the forest where the holy spring is located. Of course, that includes the elves.

The Galadriel tribe gave birth to Vyvyan Galadriel, the strongest war machine. The previous king... no, the king before the previous king chose to leave. He didn't leave entirely voluntarily, but partly because Vyvyan stood out too much.

Only she could lead the masses. It's a world where mana is justice, thereby making Vyvyan the ultimate ruler.

The gurgling holy spring flowed across the small creek in front. The old elf turned around to look at the forest, which rustled gently as if a breeze had blown past.

He hesitated for a moment before saying, "It's you, right, Vyvyan? My beloved daughter, every time you appear, you cause an incredible mana fluctuation. I can sense it."

The entire forest shook and then Vyvyan gracefully came out of the forest in her emerald dress like it was the forest that transformed into the dress. His daughter stood in the spot where light could only reach it partially.

She looked at the elder in front of her with her blue eyes and an expression

that showed she wanted to smile. She made a small bow and then spoke out with her clear and beautiful voice, “Long time, no see, Father. Are you still well?”

“I’m very well. With the spring water healing me, I’ll be fine.” The elder stood up, walked over to his daughter and hugged her.

Vyvyan hugged her father tightly and then said, “I have not come to see you in a long time. I think I started rarely visiting you after Troy was born since I am the queen, and Troy’s mother before I am your daughter.”

“I know, I know. Troy is your only child. He’s your child with Inard, and the successor our Galadriel tribe is most proud of.”

The elder looked at his daughter’s incomparably beautiful cheeks. He knocked with his crutch and continued, “Though I’m glad that you could come and visit me, I feel that the elven imperial capital and Troy, needs you more. Child, how is Troy?”

“Troy is getting married.”

The elder’s eyes lit up to Vyvyan’s simple response. He then smiled at his daughter with excitement and said, “Time really is interesting. Despite us having plenty of time, we still sigh that time passes.”

“Troy is getting married, huh? How nice, how nice. My grandson should be handsome and suave now since he is the heir of our Galadriel tribe. Our descendants have always looked good.”

"So what's my granddaughter-in-law like? Is her blood pure? Does she possess an abundance of mana? Can she give birth to an adequately strong descendant with our Troy?"

Vyvyan shook her head. She smiled helplessly and answered, "I am sorry, Father. Troy does not seem to be getting married for the sake of the next generation. His wife is a very ordinary elf. Very, very ordinary. However, since they have been together for a long time, their love for each other is very deep. Troy could give his life away for her..."

"What good is that?!" The elder's kind eyes turned indifferent in the blink of an eye. He looked at his daughter while knocking with his crutch loudly.

He created a ditch by stomping his foot on the ground and raged, "What meaning is there in a love that was nurtured for a long time to an elf?! Only humans find meaning in time! What is the meaning of having someone accompany us?! If being with someone for a long time was a criterion for getting married then Troy could marry all the women around him! That's absolutely pointless! Troy needs a wife with pure-blood and an abundance of mana! Only such a love fits our tribe's tradition!"

"I agree with you, Father. I apologise, Father, I have doted on Troy a little excessively." Vyvyan nodded. While she said that amicably, anger still surfaced in her blue eyes.

She allowed no one to criticise her son, even her own father could not. If someone were to insult her most beloved son in front of her, she would personally rip that individual to shreds.

"Cancel their wedding, then. That should be a simple matter for an elven

queen, right? If you can't, then kill that woman. I believe that you would do anything to protect your tribe and son, right? Killing someone is but a simple matter for you, as well, isn't it?"

While looking at her father, Vyvyan seriously replied, "There certainly would be no problem. However, my son loves her. Since he loves her, I will not do anything that would make my son angry."

"What about our next generation then?! What about the next king?! Troy is the successor whom I have high hopes for. What happens after his rule? What will become of our tribe if he doesn't have a successor? If we don't have a suitable successor, how are we going to control the holy spring? Are we going to go sucking blood after we lose access to the holy spring?!" The elder looked at Vyvyan furiously.

Mana was everything for the Galadriel tribe, because dark elves require mana to live. The reason their tribe didn't need to suck blood is that they had access to the holy spring of the elves, which provided them with unlimited mana. They could fulfil their desire for mana by drinking water and therefore did not need to suck blood.

But if they don't have access to the holy spring, the Galadriel tribe will become the dark elf tribe they once slaughtered.

The elves require the holy spring because they require mana. If they want to manage and rule the holy spring, they must make others submit to their ruler.

Vyvyan looked at her furious father. She stroked her lower abdomen and then said with a blissful smile, "It's alright, my dear father. I have already come up with a plan and completed it. If required, our next successor can be born. And

he will possess an ultra-high level of mana since he is the child of two elves with super-high mana levels. Thus, he too will definitely be a being with ultra-high mana levels. He might even be the next demigod.”

Vyvyan’s father lingered for a moment. He looked at Vyvyan’s lower abdomen, smiled helplessly and said, “You actually went and... did that... Did you use Time-freeze... to stop the child from growing...? But don’t you have any thoughts about this? This sort of thing...”

“Of course not. I am doing it for our tribe and our future. Moreover...” Vyvyan laughed gently and then continued, “Moreover, I feel very blissful... since this is my most beloved child... with my son...”

“Well if it’s fine if you like it. It’s fine as long as you’re fine. We can support her if Troy and that woman manage to give birth to an acceptable child. But if it doesn’t work out, we’ll have your child with your child support our tribe. That said, can your son accept this?”

“Of course he will. He definitely will because he doesn’t know...”

Ch. 40

“Your Highness... I don’t want to use this type of weapon...”

“You’ll be fine. Just give it a try...”

Lucia looked at the rifle in my hand with displeasure. Her eyes were filled to the brim with displeasure, as though I had asked her to look at something I shouldn’t have.

I really want for Lucia to use one of them, because guns are superior killing weapons compared to bows and arrows. Well, to be fair, that’s not quite one-

hundred percent true yet, but it definitely will be in the future.'

I know the reason why elves aren't willing to use guns. These things will destroy forests, and it's also the weapon that killed countless elves ten years ago. This sort of weapon was a curse, from the standpoint of elves. However, I feel that Lucia needs this sort of thing now because she's just an ordinary elf, now.

Lucia's skills with a sword are considered intermediate level. Lucia isn't bad, but the people around her are monsters; so it makes it look like all her efforts are failures. However, she is actually a fair bit superior to normal troops and even the imperial guards.

Most importantly, Lucia, now, no longer has the buffs provided by the wind elves. Lucia is truly very weak in her current state, hence, she needs a weapon.

"Didn't you leave a gun with me before...? I just hung it up. I never used it. Your Highness, that gun seems different to other guns." Lucia then looked at me and asked, "Is that gun somehow different?"

"Uhm, that's right. I made that gun specifically for you. You can use that gun, right?"

I suddenly remembered it. I would've totally forgotten about that gun if Lucia had not mentioned it. I made an air-gun specifically for Lucia. My idea was great, at the time. It was intended for Lucia to control the wind and then fire bullets from the gun, but Lucia can't do that anymore.

"Why?" Lucia looked at me with a hint of excitement and said, "If you made it specifically for me, I must use it! So what exactly is the function of that gun, Your Highness?"

"That gun isn't fired using gunpowder." I removed the barrel, which the bullet travels through. I then showed Lucia the bullet inside and added, "Rifles before required a place for storing gunpowder. When gunpowder passes through it and makes contact, it explodes and fires the bullet. The same still applies, except that the position of the gunpowder has been changed."

"Your gun doesn't have gun powder. It uses air -pressure to fire bullets. The reasons guns are a weapon that destroys your forest is precisely due to the

burning of gu powder. If they were wind-powered instead of being powered by gu powder, you would be able to use it, right?"

Lucia fell silent for a while. She then nodded and replied, "I can use a gun that isn't powered by gunpowder. However, Your Highness, I can no longer use wind magic, though. It's not that I totally can't, but that I would need a very long time to gather enough of the element... So, I think it's better that I don't use it..."

"Ah... true..."

'Indeed, Lucia basically has no combat power, now.'

Nier is the one that can protect me normally, but there shouldn't be anyone on the elven side who wants to harm me so I needn't be worried about elven magic. Thus, I won't need anyone who knows magic to protect me. Further, I have the protection of the demigod, Vyvyan. I don't think there will be any issues with the elven side.

"I've completed the two-hundred rifles you asked for." The red-haired lady appeared behind us and patted me firmly on my shoulder. She then looked at the humanoid target in front of us, which was swaying.

"Not bad Your Majesty. If that's what you managed to hit, your marksmanship is great. Uhm, uhm, you need to have the skills to protect yourself as the prince, too!" She said.

I smiled helplessly.

'My marksmanship isn't bad under these circumstances, but once I'm in a pinch, I'm not all that. I remember I emptied my bullets to kill just three people when I was assassinated. I still don't have the psychological capability to fire stably in the midst of intense fights.'

'I don't even fire guns after all. I can only shoot calmly in games. Most of my shooting skills were acquired from FPS games...'

"Not bad. This rifle is ideal." I put the barrel back into the gun. Aiming at the target and emptied all the bullets into it, making the target sway.

The rifle could fire rapidly, and the firepower wasn't bad. To compensate for the lethality of these rifles, which is a bit lacking, I asked Mommy Vyvyan to

pour the magic from the potions elves make into three pools. I then soaked the bullets that we produced in the magic so that the bullets would be imbued with mana. Explosion, Ignite and Vicious Venom were completed in a moment. And then we have the granddaddy of bullets.

'I'm sure that even Earth Dragons will have to run from the onslaught of repeat firing guns. They might not get killed, but anyone would be scared by something raining bullets intensely, like a fire-breathing dragon.'

I have every reason to call my cavalry unit the Dragon Rider Unit, because while they're rampaging on the dragons, their guns will be firing like dragon's breath.

I must admit that they're not great at shooting while riding horses. But as soldiers tasked with controlling the enemy lines with repeat firing rifles, they don't need to be super-accurate marksmen. They just need to scatter the enemies then dismount and engage.

I looked outside.

Two hundred people were training their sword skills orderly under Nier's instructions.

The one that really resembled a girl, that soldier...

'What was his name again...? Whatever.'

He was training with the men, too... Wait. He is a guy... His serious, white, and feminine face shone with radiance under the light. His crystal-like drops of sweat made him look heroic. His movements weren't very similar to Nier's.

Watching him, I almost wondered why a woman was in my guard unit.

'He's dressed in a guy's clothing, has the vocal tone of a guy and isn't deliberately copying female mannerisms, so why do I keep thinking he's a girl...? That's too freaking scary. If Nier wasn't aware that he was a guy, she would never allow a woman in my guard unit.'

'I don't think Lucia would either...'

This young man's loyalty is definitely true because I saved him; which is also why he's the team captain. These men were gathered from all different teams,

previously, so their skills and qualities were completely different.

However, through the regulations I put down, and Nier's demonic training, the group was now well organised and executed every order without fail. Not only was their marksmanship superb, but their sword skills were gradually improving under Nier's tutelage.

I believe that this team will soon be a team that I'm proud of.

They should be a team that is no less than the Valkyries or imperial guards.

This is my city and my guard unit. I've been here for almost a month and have finally settled old accounts and whatnot. My guard unit is steadily improving as well.

Now I need to resolve the most severe problem next. I must resolve this before spring arrives. And that is, I must enable my people to grow crops that can be traded...

Ch. 41

Elven goods are excellent to humans because their goods, which were made with mana, are more beautiful and exquisite than that humans make. However, due to the fact that the products contain mana, elves are needed in order to make the products.

I went to Vyvyan's room, again.

I don't know what the story is, but Vyvyan has been in an especially good mood recently. So good that she doesn't get angry when she sees me taking a stroll with Elizabeth. Instead, she presses her hands on her stomach and looks at Elizabeth with an extremely strange smile, the way you'd smile when mocking and looking down on someone.

That caused Elizabeth and me to be completely bewildered as to what was going on.

"Didn't Mommy tell you already? Although Mommy loves you, Mommy cannot use Mommy's influence to make elves work for humans. The elves won't agree to it, even if I order them to. In the end, you will have endless conflict and contradictions, too. Mommy is thinking for your betterment, Son." Vyvyan rejected me once again.

She wore a comforting smile as she stroked my head. She then said, "Sorry my son. If you need Mommy, Mommy won't hesitate to stay. But Mommy can't get the others to be like Mommy. Mommy isn't a tyrant like Elizabeth. Mommy can bring it up with them, but cannot force them."

I nodded. I could understand Mom's difficulties.

The elves didn't want to interact too much with the outside world, to begin with. However, I didn't give up because I knew my father was an elf who was willing to interact with humans, back then. I have faith that an elf, among the elves, is willing to interact with humans.

"Mom, didn't my father want to interact with humans back then? Are there still elves willing to interact with humans? Elves and humans have started trade relations, so they should be communicating a lot more than in the past. Is there no elf who is willing to live here in humanity's lands?"

'If we can't force them, we can still encourage a few of them to come over, right? I don't believe that there's no one who's willing to come... Elves and humans had kids together back then. Aren't there bound to be other elves who'd be interested in that, too? Furthermore, elves and humans are interacting a lot more now.'

Vyvyan shook her head, "Do you remember Onii-sama's ending? If we're talking about back then, we didn't know what humans were like, so we were curious about them. However, that group of curious elves is already dead. There is basically no one left who is willing to interact with humans more than absolutely necessary."

'It looks like the war ten years ago left a traumatic image with the elves... But I think Elizabeth's order was definitely a vengeful scorched Earth strategy. That basically made elves averse to interacting with humans at all again.'

'If it weren't for trade relations, the two races might have broken off all

communications completely.'

'But it looks like it's thanks to me that we've managed to maintain the most basic level of peace between the two races. It looks like there's no such thing as true peace on this continent. Or rather it's only peaceful on the surface. As soon as something happens to me, their anger and resentment will explode and the continent will be engulfed in war once again.'

'I need to protect myself properly... not only for myself but also for the sake of maintaining the peace on this continent...'

"But not all elves submit to me." Vyvyan looked at my expression and chuckled softly. She then continued, "Son, do you remember the dark elves? Some countless small elven tribes, that aren't willing to submit to me, reside in the forest. They were pursued by us, back then, but we have already forgiven them. However, they still aren't willing to leave the forest."

"I think that those elves would still be willing to work in humanity's lands since a permanent home and food is very important to those elves."

I lingered for a moment before asking, "Them? Are they truly useful?"

"Of course they are. They weren't banished because of mana or something. They were banished for other reasons. They were driven out when they didn't support the right side in the internal elven war back then. If you can find them and bring them here, you will be able to begin your dye business." Vyvyan replied with a smile.

The plan should benefit both of us. I don't think Vyvyan wants to see tribes opposing her in her own forest, either; such as the dark elves. After the incident last time, Vyvyan is definitely more concerned about powers opposing her.

If humanity goads them into assassinations, Vyvyan will have to slaughter again.

'Not that I'm saying that she didn't slaughter a bunch last time already...'

'I can provide them with a respectable job. They didn't get affected by the war last time, either. I think they'd throw a celebration if they saw the Galadriel tribe get driven back like that. As they say, your enemy's enemy is your friend. I'm sure that the group definitely likes ganging up.'

I looked at Mom and asked, “Do you know where they are then, Mom?”

Vyvyan gently tapped the corner of her mouth and then responded with a smile, “Of course, Mommy knows where they are. They thought they were very well hidden, but I knew very well where they were. It’s just that it’s not the best idea for Mommy to go and personally kill them. Therefore, Mommy shall let you complete this job, Son. But remember, Son, you can’t live on the elven side right now. Your mana has only recovered temporarily. Before it completely recovers, you can’t be on the elven side, so...”

I dawdled for a moment.

‘I can’t ask Mom to do this as there’s no way she could convince them. If they saw Mom, they’d definitely get into a fight with her; not to mention that they can’t beat her. Then their hidden members will get eradicated... And then my last hope will go poof...’

‘Elves by my side... elves by my side...’

‘It seems that the only elf I’ve always been ordering around is Lucia... But Lucia is pregnant so there’s no chance in hell I’m letting Lucia leave me. I’d rather not have this city then to put her at risk.’

“So, Son, do you want me to get the imperial guards to handle this matter? Of course, if the prince was to personally go, the hidden elves would see it as you showing them a form of respect. It’s best if you send someone who is at your side. The closer they are to you the better.”

Vyvyan stood up and then waved her hand. A few tiny dots appeared on the map to the side.

Vyvyan handed me the map and said, “The dots on this map are their gathering spots. Just pass this map on to someone you trust, Son. Do you have anyone you can trust around you? If you don’t, just let Mommy handle it.”

I hesitated for a moment.

‘Most of the people around me are humans... As for elves, I only have Lucia. I had Mera, but... she’s dead.’

I still took the map, nonetheless, though. To be honest, I still had another

person in mind... But the person I had in mind probably wasn't a good option. Actually, she was a terrible option. She had just escaped from the elven side, her family members on the elven side are all dead, and her family even tried to sell her off...

And that person is...

Luna.

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I was a little uncomfortable tasking Luna with such a dangerous job because Luna is more unwelcome on the elven side than she is on humanity's side. Plus, Luna had been hurt by the elves.

Her brother tried to sell her off, and kill me, last time. That must've left a scar on her heart, I imagine.

Though she didn't mention it, I noticed that she had put everything related to the elves away, including the head cloth that I had given her.

'I guess she's not willing to have anything to do with the elves anymore and just wanted to stay by my side as my personal servant. However, seeing how loyal she is to me, I believe that Luna will go if I need her to...'

'If only all this happened before Lucia got pregnant...'

'Maybe this is my fault, because my relationship with Luna wasn't actually bad, before. I've been totally focused on work, Lucia and Nier recently, though. Luna replied with annoyance whenever she spoke, so Luna seems to be angry...'

"Welcome back, Your Majesty."

Though Luna welcomed me with a smile when I returned to my room, she didn't say another word after she turned from taking my cape and coat.

I smiled as I looked at her back and called, "Luna?"

She turned around to look at me and asked with a very polite smile on her

face, “Do you have orders, Your Majesty?”

I could see that there was a hint of sadness in her smile. She never looked at me with this sort of smile in the past. Her smile used to be more passionate and gentle.

The smile she wore now was one she would show an outsider.

I scratched my head and asked, “Erm... Luna, how is the training for the palace maids coming along?”

Luna made a small bow and then replied, “I have already reported the progress and status to Miss Freya. Most of the maids are now able to perform some jobs. Major and minor jobs in the palace have been organised appropriately.”

“Luna, you’re not angry are you...?”

“No, Your Majesty. Why would I be angry?”

I think I just asked a question that all girls hate. Luna’s reaction made it obvious she was angry.

‘That question of mine truly was mega-stupid... Of course, she won’t say she’s angry. How was she going to admit it? What, is she supposed to say “I am angry because you ignored me”? Luna doesn’t have any right to be angry over that. We agreed that we wouldn’t act on our feelings for each other.’

“Sorry, Luna. I’ve been too busy recently, so I’ve left you alone.” I decided to take the initiative to apologise. I looked at Luna and bowed deeply, with sincerity.

“Luna, I’m very sorry. I didn’t leave you alone on purpose, nor was it because of the new maids that I ignored you... It was just because I was too busy. So I’m sorry.” I added.

“... Hmph!” Luna looked at me then looked away and snorted.

She then said, “No. I said I wasn’t angry. You are a man with wives. A personal servant, such as myself, has no right to be angry. So, Your Majesty, what brings you here? If you have business, just tell me. I will make sure that it is done.”

I reached my arms out and pulled Luna into my embrace.

Luna hesitated, then gently wrapped her arms around to my back. She softly said, "Your Majesty... you... sometimes... you are stupid, while, sometimes, you know how to win the affection of girls... You are a scary man... But tell me, you came to me with a request, right?"

"Ah... Yeah." I looked at Luna and fell silent for a moment.

Luna looked at me then tilted her head and said, "Your Majesty, just tell me what it is. If you have come to me, when you have so many people by your side, then that means that this job must need me, right? Please tell me, Your Majesty. I will definitely complete your request."

"Indeed, this job requires you... However... I don't think you will be too willing... But... But... This job does require you... Though admittedly, the reason is very selfish."

I looked at Luna. I twitched my lips a few times and then in a serious tone continued, "Luna, I need you to enter the elven forest to help me locate some elves, and then persuade them to come here to work for me."

The atmosphere suddenly went silent. Luna looked at me blankly, with surprise in her eyes. She pushed me away then touched her face and ears. She stopped when she reached her ears and stuttered, "Your Majesty... I... I..."

"I know. I know what you went through on the elven side. I also know that you might not want to go back there ever again. But I don't have any other elves by my side. Lucia is pregnant, so I can't let her go..."

Luna is very smart. She smiled helplessly and cut me off, "What you are trying to say is that the place I need to go to is dangerous, correct?"

"... Uhm." I nodded.

I looked at Luna as I nervously elaborated, "But it's not very dangerous. The people that you need to locate aren't the kind who wears their hostility like a coat. I should say that they're people I want to convince to come to my side. However, we don't understand them which makes it dangerous... Umm... umm... It's definitely not the sort of job where you'd be killed if you go there..."

Luna seemed to be absentminded as she listened to my explanation. She then revealed a relieved smile and responded, "Please tell me where I should go,

Your Majesty.”

“Ah?” My explanation suddenly got cut short.

I froze up.

Luna tilted her head and then asked, “What is the matter, Your Majesty? Did you not say you needed my help? Did I not need to go somewhere?”

“But...”

“I don’t mind.” Luna tilted her head and then with a casual smile said, “Miss Lucia is pregnant, so, we cannot let her go on such a dangerous job. Since I am the only elf left by your side, I am duty bound. I am your guard, Your Majesty. My body, soul, and my everything belongs to you. I shall head into danger. I will not cower.”

I looked at Luna’s earnest gaze. I smiled bitterly, then reached my arms out to pull her small body to me. Luna’s body was soft, but I could see that her heart and soul were incomparably strong.

I had always felt sad about the things that such a strong girl had to go through. And now she was heading into danger without any concern for herself, for my sake.

As I hugged Luna, I sincerely said to her near her ear, “Thank you, Luna. Thank you.”

Luna laughed softly and leaned onto my shoulder. She softly said, “It is alright, Your Majesty. I am willing to do anything for you, even if it is giving up my life...”

I firmly said next to her ear, “Don’t say that, Luna. I won’t let any of you leave me... If you run into danger, run. Forget everything. I just want you to return. I just want you to return.”

‘I don’t want anyone to sacrifice their life for me again. If Luna is in danger, I’ll go and save her like I did Nier, even if that means I’ll die to the mana of elves. I’ll put my time and life on the line to save her.’

“Uhm... Okay.”

We separated. Freya then opened the door and looked at us with suspicion. She then informed me, “Your Majesty, please come to the guestroom. Socina’s

envoy is waiting.”

“Didn’t I see him already last time at the ball?”

“He must have something else he wants to discuss this time. Just head on over.” Freya made a small bow and then glared daggers at Luna.

Luna draped my cape and coat back onto me and said with a smile, “Please be careful not to overwork yourself, Your Majesty.”

“Uhm...”

I looked at Luna and this time, her smile was gentle like it usually was again.

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“What’s Socina City like?”

“Do you really not know? Ah... I guess it is within reason since you have been busy being intimate with Miss Lucia and Miss Nier. You have forgotten all about the ambition you initially had, I bet... Alright, Onii-sama, since my job is to assist you, I shall not criticise you about your private life, which includes the matter with you and Miss Luna.” Freya looked ahead in a grumpy way.

She then drew a map in the air and explained, “Socina City is to our west. It is a city located at the base of a mountain. It is very cold there. It gained its reputation through business. There is a salt lake there, so they produce salt as well as salted meats. They also have various iron tools of excellent quality and a very famous artisan. Even orders for the empire’s cannons are sometimes placed there.”

I nodded. It sounds like it’s a business city. I presume humans, who could live at the base of a snowy mountain, are different to us.

‘However, I have heard very little about the city. It looks like it should be a city relatively rich in materials. Rosvenor saw a need to marry their daughter off to them as well, back then. They didn’t get dragged into the war, either. So it

appears that it is a very stable world there.'

I don't know what a prospering city like that is making contact with me for. But the envoy I met at the ball last time did indeed leave a positive impression with me. An envoy represents the reputation of a nation. Castell and the envoy are both qualified to represent their nations.

I, too, want to know what Socina City wants to discuss with me.

The envoy had been sitting inside the guestroom waiting for a very long time. He stood up and gave me a deep bow when he saw me, then greeted me, "Your Majesty!"

"Ah, sit." I waved my hand and then sat in the master seat.

Freya sat down to the side and watched us.

I looked at the envoy and said, "So what have you come for this time? Speak freely. As long as it's reasonable, I will agree. You don't need to be nervous."

"That is fantastic then. Your Majesty, I believe that what I am about to say is not a bad thing because there are no drawbacks to trading, for us, is that not right?" The envoy smiled and nodded.

He then asked, "Your Majesty, I came here for that this time. After our new lord found out you had built a new city here, she was very interested. She wanted to develop a trading relationship with you. It would be best if our merchants could gain more profit. Naturally you, too, would profit from a normal business trade, is that not right?"

I nodded and then suggested, "You're right. I'm worried about trading as well. I'm not against it since our goods can be traded normally. Now, let's discuss the details."

"Great. Thank you very much for your wisdom, Your Majesty. Seeing as we want to do business; we need to know what you have here that we need. Your Majesty, I found out something very interesting from your sister at the ball last time. I heard that you wanted to grow an elven dye crop, if I am correct."

I froze up and then looked at Freya.

Freya's face looked a little pale. She opened her mouth, but then went silent

for a moment before saying, “We do indeed have such plans. However, we still have no clue on how to go about it. You need to talk about it with His Majesty... As for what is bought... I do not have the rights to make the call.”

“It’s alright.” I shook my head.

I then looked at him and said, “It’s like this. We want to grow the elves’ dye crop, however; you need to understand that humanity’s factories cannot extract the elves’ dye. We can plant the crop needed for the elves’ dye, but we need a method to turn it into a dye.”

The envoy went silent.

‘It looks like he was unaware that the elves’ dye required their magic to extract.’

A moment later, he nodded and replied, “The elves’ dye is a dye our city needs. It is a needed item for nobles. However, because of a problem on the elves side, the transportation, and the price, it is very expensive to procure. We were thinking that if you could produce it as well, then we might be able to purchase it at a lower price, I presume?”

I looked at him and responded in a serious tone, “If possible, of course, I can sell them to you at a lower price. However, what’s more important is that we are on very good terms with the elves. You should already be aware that one of my wives is an elf. If we affect their trade by selling the dye to you, then we will be forced to refuse your request, too.”

It’s a given that I’m not going to do something that would impact the elves for my own personal gain. Vyvyan had looked after me a lot. If our prices here are too low, that will make it impossible for the elves to sell their dye.

“You do not have to worry about that. It has been so many years already. Our trade volume with the elven side has never been much.” The envoy smiled bitterly and then elaborated, “The elves do not seem to be willing to trade with us. As opposed to calling it trading, perhaps it would be better to say that the elves were just swapping their left-over stuff with us. I believe that they will not be affected, even if we buy the dye from you here. Further, the most important thing is that the ratio of trades with elves that were for their dye is not much.”

'That is indeed what the elves would do... They are self-sufficient and only sell when they have spares. It looks like the elves wouldn't complain even if I were to snatch away their business.'

I suddenly realised that I could certainly earn from the difference. If I can't produce it here, I could buy the dye from the elves, at a low price and then sell it to Socina.

Of course, that is hypothetical. But even then, I wouldn't be left with much money.

The envoy hesitated for a moment before saying, "Your Majesty, we are sincere about trading with you, and we really do want to be able to find a way to buy the elves' dye at a cheaper price. But can you truly make it happen? Or have you already given up on this plan?"

I looked at him and replied, "I won't give up. It's just that our plan hasn't completely succeeded yet... If you require an answer, I can only hope that you can wait. I can't guarantee that I'll succeed, for sure, but we share the same gains and losses. I hope that you can explain this to the reigning lord of your city. I will do my best to produce the dye. If you need, I shall do my best to give you a discount."

The envoy nodded and then thought about it.

I think that he thought we had gotten a start on it and wanted to reserve some dye with us first, but didn't expect that I hadn't gotten it set up, yet. Discussing it with me when I don't have the dye is just a complete waste of time.

I personally want to seal the deal on this. I was originally planning to sell it to the southern regions, but who would complain about having too many customers?

I looked at him with anticipation.

Not long after, he stood up as though he had made up his mind. He made a small bow and then said, "I will report it to our lord, then. Your Majesty, you are different to other officials and ministers. I can see a vigorous spirit and ambition within you. I do not think that we will suffer losses if we make this agreement

work. I also have faith in your competence. Your Majesty, while this may be rude of me, I hope that you will not let my anticipation come to nothing.”

I stood up, nodded firmly and responded, “I won’t. I will let you get what you want, and similarly, you must give me what I need.”

“We have a deal!”

Ch. 44

“Your Majesty.”

“Castell?!” I looked at Castell who was smiling in front of me absolutely stunned.

Castell bowed as he smiled. He then looked at me and said, “Your Majesty, it looks like you are very busy. We arrived last night, but I did not see you. Miss Freya said that you were very busy, so I came to see you during the day.”

My face went red.

You wouldn’t be wrong if you said I had been very busy every night, recently... mainly because of Nier’s need. I ran away from Nier last night, saying that I needed to go and see Mom when I actually went to comfort Luna...

‘I genuinely feel that I’m the most useless dimensional traveller.’

‘Others who travel dimensions are prominent, overpowered figures; beating people to a pulp and surrounded by countless beauties glued to them. I’m the only one who has to betray his body to keep his life and career intact!’

‘How is my life so miserable?! Did I really dimensional travel here?! I’m so miserable that I have to betray my body... I’m a guy! I’m a guy!’

I sent Luna off today.

I assigned a Valkyrie and an imperial guard team captain to protect her. There shouldn’t be any problems. I also sneakily handed the necklace to Luna so that Vyvyan could immediately come to her rescue when she was in danger.

'Even if Vyvyan gets mad and goes berserk, I just have to give her hugs and kisses and we're good.'

'More importantly, though, I won't let Luna meet with any mishap.'

When I came back, I saw Castell.

I was a bit dazed. What looks perfectly normal is completely abnormal, when it happens here. Castell shouldn't be here right now. He should've already returned to the royal capital, to handle matters in place of the empress; but here he is in front of me now.

'Did he dimensional travel or did I dimensional travel?'

"You look very surprised... Your expression makes me wonder if I have done something wrong... But is it not normal for me to be here? Or am I not welcome at your wedding?" Castell chuckled and then continued, "It is coming up. I have brought the major ministers here, because Her Majesty invited us. What is the matter, Your Majesty? Are you not supposed to be happy right now?"

"Ah yeah... my wedding... yeah."

Honestly, I almost forgot about that... Too many things happened recently. My two wives had been behaving themselves, too. Neither of them had rushed me since I told them that I would marry them once I was done with work. But I almost forgot about it... Our life right now is the same as married life, after all...

"You did not almost forget about it, did you? That is not good, Your Majesty. Your wedding is important to the princess, Her Majesty, and you, as well. Of course, please excuse my rudeness, but your wedding is very important to me, too." Castell made a small bow.

He then raised his head and spoke with a smile, "Her Majesty has never held a wedding before, after all. You will be the first person to receive the blessings of the entire empire. As such, the news of your marriage has already shocked all the vassal states. Their gifts are already on their way. I believe they will soon arrive. They have also arranged for large groups of representatives to come. They will join the hunting festival in spring."

I felt my head go numb.

'It's just a wedding, so what are they doing treating it like it's the empress' birthday like last time...? Actually, they're making it grander than the empress's birthday. It looks like the empire's first wedding really is a grandeur event... However, I've never seen such a large-scale parade. All of the vassal states... doesn't that mean half of the continent...? Ah, wait, the elves are counted too! So in other words, everybody on the continent is paying attention to my wedding.'

'I used to only care if I had a girlfriend or not and yet the entire continent was called on just because I'm getting married! Such a grand event is freaking scary. Wait. I don't know what it's like since it's on a scale I've never witnessed.'

"Therefore Your Majesty, please look forward to your wedding. Her Majesty initially wanted to plan your wedding herself, but you delayed it over and over again so Her Majesty got impatient. She, therefore, chose a day but it does not sound like she has told you. Is there something bothering you?" Castell smiled. His smile carried a sense of pride he had in himself, with a bit of gloating.

It looks like he was the one who made most of the plans for my wedding. But since he was able to be the one to plan my wedding, it indicates the degree of trust the empress has for him. Was he showing off his competence to me or was he trying to show off how much he was trusted?

I shook my head and then asked, "Nothing really... It was mainly because I was too absorbed in my work. I would've forgotten if you didn't remind me. But this is fine. I, too, feel that this can't be delayed any further. I'm kind of letting Nier down. Oh, right, is Nier's wedding dress ready?"

"Of course it is. I promise that it will definitely be captivating because there are diamonds all over it! The empress had the crown made according to her own crown's standards." Castell nodded proudly and continued, "You could buy a small nation with Miss Nier's clothes. As the princess of the empire, she naturally needs to show off her most extravagant and best side at her wedding. It looks like you are very surprised, Your Majesty. It is alright, it is alright. It is but a simple matter for us to make such a wedding dress given the empire's treasury."

"No... I was just thinking that... only Nier would be able to wear that dress..." I

pressed my palm to my forehead and sighed. I couldn't help but grin.

'How heavy would all that be...? Not even Mom was willing to wear her crown. Lucia wouldn't even be able to move if she wore it.'

'I feel sorry for you, Nier.'

Lucia's wedding dress looks better. I really did see creatures like fireflies fly around following Lucia's wedding dress like a small elf clearing trees out. Lucia's wedding dress was very exquisite and filled with mana.

So humanity, who had fitted Nier's dress with luxurious gems, ... it feels a little low-class.

But it doesn't matter since humanity brought out their best, just like the elves.

Castell nodded and then said with a smile, "I need not say any more, Your Majesty. If I say any more, I will have revealed too much. Your Majesty, please look forward to your wedding."

"And one more thing Your Majesty. Though work is certainly important, you must spare more time for your wife and mother, Your Majesty. Her Majesty's mood has been slightly strange recently. I hope you can go and see her."

"Ah, alright. Thank you, Castell. Oh, and also, don't you have a wife?"

"No." Castell made a short pause and then looked at me to say, "I do not have a wife. I have always been looking after Her Majesty. I am not interested, either. But you need not worry. I do have a woman that I like."

"Yeah...?"

I scanned Castell.

'He is a talented person and is the empress' valued minister. Given his status, there would definitely be a mass of women rushing over if he were to say he wanted to get married, right? But why is he still single? Wait. Is it a one-sided love?'

'Well, whatever, I hope it works out for him. As someone who's about to get married, I feel like I want to make everyone happy. I hope Castell can be happy, too.'

Castell bowed with a smile and watched His Majesty leave. He turned around and took out a gold coin from his pocket. He looked at the empress' face on it and chuckled softly. He then placed it back into his pocket and left.

Ch. 45

"Wedding ceremony...?" Nier placed her fork down and looked at me, a little surprised. She then wiped her mouth with her hand and excitedly exclaimed, "Your Majesty, are you finally free?!"

"For the moment, I guess. Mainly because M-... Her Majesty planned it. I was clueless." I smiled, chuckling. I looked at Nier, who was so excited that her hands and feet were twitching, and continued, "But I must admit that I had actually pretty much had forgotten about it. I've honestly been flooded with too much work recently and our relationship... how do I put it? It's like we've been married for a long time already."

Nier nodded with a soft giggle. She then clasped her face gently and smiled with complete infatuation, looking somewhat silly. She mumbled to herself, "Ah... I'm so looking forward to my wedding dress... ehehe... It'll be my first time seeing one. I've never seen one before... I keep getting to see new things after getting married to His Majesty. I never thought I'd be able to get married in the past, but I'm the princess now..." Nier smiled blissfully and spaced out.

Her change was actually quite significant. Just two months ago, she wore a stern look and kept saying to me "Please kill yourself", and always remarking "I'm Her Majesty's Valkyrie." But now she's completely transformed into a young housewife who waits for my return every night with a bright smile.

'Nier didn't see herself as a woman in the past. She treated herself as Her Majesty's tool. When did she begin to change?'

'I don't know, but isn't it good enough that we have a happy ending?' I picked up my cup of tea with a smile and scanned Nier.

I suddenly noticed that Nier hadn't really touched the food on her plate.

'Come to think of it; Nier's appetite has decreased a fair bit. When I first asked her, she just said she didn't have an appetite. I didn't think too much of it, either since Nier is a lot healthier, and stronger physically, than Lucia.'

'But it's been a number of days now. Nier has to instruct my guards in swordplay every day. Will she be okay like this?'

I looked at Nier and said, "Nier, are you alright? I noticed that you were eating less and less. You have to teach every day, as well. How about giving them a few days off? Don't get sick before our wedding."

Nier paused for a moment, then revealed a smile intended to put me at ease and replied, "I'm alright, Your Majesty. I'm feeling fine... It's just that my body recently... erm... it's not my body's fault... It's that the things I consumed recently... put me off from eating."

Nier's expression turned a little imposing when she said "... the things that I consumed..." like she wanted to vomit. I frowned and asked, "What did you consume the last two days, Nier?"

"The drugs that can speed up pregnancy... Her Majesty gave them to me..." Nier paused and then went on, "It tasted terrible. After I ate it, my lower abdomen kept feeling hot and I wanted to see you even more. I kept having the urge to do that..."

'Yeah? 'Cause I think you were the same before you had that stuff... That's definitely not because of the drug. It's just that your instincts are now different.'

I looked at her silently, let out a heavy sigh and said, "Nier, didn't I tell you not to rush that? We'll definitely have our own child. There's no point for you to be like that. You're harming your body like this. Nier, you're not to consume those types of drugs again. Eat properly. If you consume them again, I'll go sleep with Her Majesty at night."

"Don't! Don't! Don't! I'm sorry, Your Majesty! You must come back at night... I can only sleep if I get to hold you..." Nier was so frightened she turned pale and nearly cried.

I sighed and stroked her head. I then said, "Don't do things that will harm

your health again. I'll be sad if you do that."

Nier looked at me and nodded gently. I told her, "We'll definitely have our own child, so you don't need to worry."

"Uhm... Your Majesty." Nier nodded and then grabbed my hand. After a soft giggle, she said, "Your Majesty, I'm really looking forward to our wedding. Honest. I'm honestly really looking forward to it."

"I am too." I nodded and then stood up.

After waiting for two seconds, I suddenly realised the Luna was not here anymore. I didn't have another personal servant, so I had to wear my cape myself.

Though there were maids around, none of them dared to come over.

No one was allowed to touch His Majesty's things other than his personal servant.

I randomly missed Luna when I picked up my cape.

'I wonder how she is doing.'

Luna doesn't have enough mana, so she can't set up a communication network with me. As such, she had no choice but to send letters back. I believe that Luna will be fine, though. That group isn't our enemy.

"Your Majesty, is something the matter?"

"Yeah. I'm going to go and see Her Majesty now. I've rarely seen her recently. I bet she's been cooped up in her room preparing for the wedding. Oh, right, Nier, when Freya gets back from the Earth Dragons' place, remember to tell her to go and see if Castell he needs any help."

Nier stood up. She took my cape off my hands and draped it onto my shoulders from in front of me. She then carefully did up the buttons.

I watched her white hands gently move about in front of me.

She then looked up and kissed my lips. She smiled and said, "Take care, Your Majesty... I've wanted to try this... and as I thought, it really does give me the feeling of being a wife."

"Thank you, Nier."

I cupped Nier's face in my hands and kissed her lips. Our tongues entwined for a while, not wanting to let go of each other. We embraced before I exited the dining hall and headed out.

I don't have any other work today, but I should go and see Mommy Elizabeth since she's done so much for me.

I really want to go and see Lucia, but Lucia has only just gotten pregnant so you can't notice any visible difference. I'm really looking forward to it, though. In fact, I'm looking forward to the birth of our child so much that I don't want to do anything.

'A cosy family is certainly what causes a man to lose his fighting spirit, after all. I definitely can't go and do dangerous things on whims after my child is born. I probably wouldn't even be willing to leave this place.'

'Though I never had any plan to conquer the world, it would be too ordinary if my dimensional travel story were to end at this small city. There are places I have yet to go to on this continent. I'll feel like I have wasted an opportunity if I stop here.'

'After Lucia's child is born, I need to give him a settled environment, a cosy home and then wait for Nier to give birth to her own child.'

'Then I'm going to take my guard unit and Earth Dragon cavalry unit north of the continent. I want to see what it's like there.'

'That's my plan. I want to have a plan. I don't want to lose my fighting spirit here. Luckily, both of my mothers are still young. If I put their grandchildren in their care, they won't fight and I can live a carefree life outside. I don't want to return to the other world either because I'm just a pile of ashes there. I'm going to enjoy my second life here to the fullest...'

'Though this isn't my life...'

Ch. 46

"Mom, I'm coming in."

"Ah, Son, come on in."

I pulled the door open and saw Elizabeth smiling broadly.

She shyly hung up a piece of cloth over her drawing, then giggled and said, "It's so embarrassing... Mommy has been drawing for so long and yet Mommy hasn't improved at all. Mommy learnt swordplay so fast, so why can't Mommy draw well...? Mommy wants to draw you. Why is it so hard?"

I looked at her sketchpad curiously and said, "It's alright, Mom. Let me have a look. I promise not to laugh at you since I think that drawing requires talent."

Mom shook her head shyly and said, "Nah... Mommy feels that Mommy drew you really badly. Mommy is going to throw it away now... Wait, no. Mommy will burn it."

"No, don't! No matter ugly it is, it's still me! It's not good to burn it, don't you think?! Does that count as cursing me? Does this count as cursing me?!" I didn't know if I should laugh or cry and pressed my hand onto Mom's.

Honestly, drawing has been a hobby of Mom's for a long time. However, I've never seen her work. I've never even seen a work like a kid's graffiti from her.

'It looks like she really does burn her drawings... Does she do that to prevent her artwork from being circulated?'

Mom looked at me. She extended her hand out to pull the cloth off her sketchpad. She looked at me and said, "Really? Don't laugh at me, Son. I don't draw well..."

"I won't... Ah..."

I looked at the drawing.

'I'm a good talker, alright? Not even the stupidest person would say something like 'Ugh, how ugly' in this situation. You would give your best'

compliment, right? But I couldn't come up with any compliment for Mom's drawing... No, it wasn't that it didn't have anything that stood out. It was basically like a kid's crayon drawing... Mm, that sort of retarded looking drawing.'

'Am I that ugly?! Burn it! Hurry up and burn this drawing! This drawing can't be circulated around. Nobody will compliment anything on this drawing. This is basically Her Majesty's embarrassing history. No wonder why she wanted to burn it! Burn it! Burn it! Completely burn it!'

"See, Mommy draws really badly, right....? It's alright, Mommy doesn't mind, either. This is just something Mommy does to kill time." Mom smiled bitterly and then took the piece of paper back. She scrunched it up and tossed it into the fire.

She then stood up, sat on the bed to the side and patted the spot next to her. She said, "Whatever the case, come sit down first, Son. Mommy has a good guess of what it is you want to say."

I walked over and sat down next to Mom.

She reached out in a reserved fashion and placed her hand on my shoulder. She then said, "You want to talk about your wedding, right? Mommy has prepared it for you. Mommy saw how you have been busy and outside every day, so Mommy took it into Mommy's own hands. Don't be angry, Son."

"No, Mom, I'm not angry. I'm actually very grateful to you. If it wasn't for you, I would've forgotten about it. That would be unfair to both Lucia and Nier." I chuckled, then hugged Mom gently and thanked her, "Thank you, Mom. Thank you for helping me organise my wedding."

I noticed that Mom's body was shaking from nervousness...

Elizabeth is different from Vyvyan. Elizabeth always gets particularly happy whenever I hug her, while I feel that Vyvyan gets sexually aroused...

Elizabeth hugged me with joy and then said, "You don't have to thank me, Son. You're Mommy's son. Mommy is very sorry for not protecting you when you were young and sorry for not being by your side. Mommy can only help you now. Mommy wants to help you organise your wedding. Mommy wants to see

you go towards happiness. You're Mommy's child, after all. Mommy wants to see you happy over the things Mommy does for you, just like that woman."

"Uhm... I'm very happy, Mom. Honest. I'm happy whether we're talking about having you by my side or marrying Nier. But are you in a hurry, Mom? About my child..."

"Uhm, Mommy is rushing that." Elizabeth nodded and then rubbed my lower abdomen...

'Thank god for you always keeping control of your hand...'

She said, "Mommy isn't an elf. When Mommy lived with the elves, Mommy came to realise the short lifespan of humans, compared to elves. Mommy doesn't know when Mommy will leave this world, so Mommy wants to see you and your family before Mommy has to leave. Son, Mommy doesn't have any other wish. Mommy just hopes that you can be happy. As long as you're happy, Mommy can leave with a smile. Mommy isn't doing this to compete with Vyvyan over something... Of course, Mommy has considered that, too, but Mommy still hopes that you can be happy. Honest."

'You just emphasised that part didn't you?! You just emphasised that last part, didn't you?! You just revealed your thoughts, didn't you?! You did it to compete with Vyvyan, didn't you?!!'

But I still believe that Mom sincerely wishes for me to be happy.

Mom hugged me and then gently stroked my head. She softly said, "Mom's biggest regret is not getting to see you grow up. Mommy wanted to see you grow up from the time you were a kid into the gentle and determined man you are now. I imagine that being able to watch over you as you go through that process would be incomparably blissful."

I looked at Elizabeth and noticed her yearning gaze.

She looked into the distance and softly murmured, "You're the most precious treasure my husband left behind for me, as well as the only memory he left for me. When Mommy sees the side of your face, Mommy can virtually see him still by Mommy's side. Mommy has no family left. You're the only one."

"Mommy really wants to see you slowly grow up, but it's impossible now.

Mommy didn't provide you with any warmth in your childhood. Mommy didn't even hold you. That's why Mommy wants to give you the most blissful wedding."

 Mom looked at me seriously. She then lowered her head and kissed me on my forehead. She softly said, "Son, your happiness is Mommy's only wish. Mommy couldn't give you happiness in the past. Mommy hopes that you can stay by Mommy's side from now on. Mommy will do Mommy's best to ensure you're happy..."

 I looked at Mom's gaze; her powerless and worried gaze. The gaze she looked at me with was so sad.

'She must be really sorry. She must be really apologetic for not having been by my side during my childhood. Mom just wanted a perfect home, but she had to leave her child behind. That must be Mom's biggest regret.'

'Mom wants for me to be happy. She wanted to give me happiness in the future. However, half of her own happiness was missing.'

"Mom." I clenched my teeth then stood up and opened my arms.

 Mom froze up as she looked at me not knowing what to do.

"Carry me like when I was a kid."

'That's a princess carry then, isn't it? Though I'm very close to Mom, this most intimate form of interaction is something we've never had.'

 Mom looked at me with her eyes full of surprise. Even her hands were shaking. She shook as she asked, "C-Can... Can I really? C-Can Mommy do that...?"

"Uhm. You said you never held me in the past. It's never too late. Come, Mom."

"Uhm!"

 Mom nodded firmly and then stood up. She wrapped her arm around my legs and then picked me right up...

"Mom! Mom!"

When I wrapped my arms around Mom's neck, she cried out with pleasant surprise and then she fell down like a stick falling over...

And so... I didn't return that night... I had to stay behind and take care of Elizabeth who passed out from excitement...

Ch. 47

I never thought my city would be so lively.

Though, there were residents present right from the start. But after bad harvests and being stripped of one thing after another, how could they have money to waste at bars and in the entertainment district?

Freya said that a city must have an entertainment district to be stable. The people need entertainment, but that wouldn't be a need when filling your belly and staying warm are problems themselves.

People came here one by one. They were all dignitaries and people from all over the lands. Many of them came because they admired Her Majesty, while some came to see me. As a result, the main thing I've been doing these days has been receiving different people.

Their identities were intricate and complex. There were musicians, academics, and even a sculptor who came to sculpt a statue of the top half of my body...

Of course, I turned him down...

'I'm still alive! I don't want to see my statue staring at me! I don't need it, yet!'

We've begun preparing for my wedding.

What was the most ironic was that the person who sent me blessings for my wedding was the young pope. When he saw me, his face turned white as a sheet due to fear.

It looks like what I did that night left him with a huge fear.

Nier, however, really liked him. Every time she saw him, she would stare at

him. Her hands would quiver, and she would keep on asking me if she could hug him.

I didn't care, since he was just a kid in Nier's eyes. I didn't want to butt heads with the church either as they had completely become the royal family's subordinate.

Their religion's doctrine had been changed to have the empress as the sovereign. Basically, they now worship the empress. Wait, no. They worship the royal family.

But the 'royal family' only consisted of two people. One was Elizabeth and the other was me.

That's why Mommy Elizabeth let Nier, who had no surname, take on the royal family's surname without hesitation.

Normally, Nier wouldn't be able to take on the royal family's surname, even if she were to marry into the royal family, with her background and identity. However, due to the royal family members being very few and Nier being liked by the empress, she was able to become part of the royal family.

Thus, she was able to go from a Valkyrie to a royal family member.

Lucia took on the Galadriel surname, however; I don't have a clue what Vyvyan is thinking. Based on fragments of what Vyvyan has told me, I only know that the Galadriel tribe is very strict about bloodlines.

Back when my father eloped with Elizabeth, the elven king sent out nearly everyone to hunt down Elizabeth. Not even Vyvyan could resist the pressure and was forced to bring her brother back.

The reason I can now do as I please is that the demigod Vyvyan now has complete control over the Galadriel tribe.

If Vyvyan had not become the yandere that she is now, she would, by now, have had a daughter who would have been made my wife for the sake of maintaining the purity of the Galadriel tribe's bloodline. If I didn't have such a sister...

I imagined Vyvyan's blood-red eyes, and a chill went up my spine...

I really would be forced to marry Vyvyan then, wouldn't I?! I would be forced to, for the sake of keeping the Galadriel tribe's bloodline pure.

Elves aren't against free-love. However, the royal family is very strict about their bloodline since mana was power.

"How is it? How is it?! Your Majesty!! How is it?!" Nier smiled cheerfully as she held the bottom of her dress and spun around.

The captivating diamond necklace she wore swayed along like a rainbow was following her graceful movements, emphasising her face. The beauty of the pair made one marvel at the sight.

A colourful phoenix was sewn onto a corner of the wedding dress. Under the swaying of the light, it looked like the phoenix was dancing.

The crown she wore wasn't as heavy as I thought. It actually looked very light. The divine shape of the phoenix must've been made from pearls.

At the back of her head was a thin veil which revealed her white neck.

Others are not permitted to use this bird shape, which resembled a phoenix, as it was the creature that represented the empress. Hillier's means "the phoenix's nest."

I think Nier is the only one who has this special honour of using the same totem as the empress.

"That's cow-tits for you. You can still move around in such heavy clothes." Lucia snorted with disdain and then wrapped her arm around mine.

She blushed as she flapped her white dress and then said, "Your Highness, mine looks better, doesn't it? Since... since... I wore this... for our first time... the moon that night sure was beautiful..."

Nier looked at her grouchily and then me with her shiny eyes. My whole body jerked and then I shook my head.

'There's no way I'm going to do it with you while you're wearing that dress! There's nothing on Lucia's dress. It's just a plain white dress, while yours has diamonds hanging off of it. I'm afraid I'll throw my back out! And you never listen to me. You pounce me whenever you feel like it. If you mount me while

wearing that dress, don't you think my ribs will bend inwards and I'll burst some organs?!"

"Tch. How shameless. You elves sure are stingy. You only get married once in a lifetime, yet you're so stingy. Or were you planning to get married a few more times after His Majesty passes away?" Nier fired back.

She hugged my other arm and showed Lucia she wasn't going to lose.

All of the hairs on Lucia's petite body stood up. She looked at Nier furiously and angrily exclaimed, "Don't apply you humans' lowly view of life to us! Our love is absolutely loyal and devoted! I will only love His Highness for my entire life! If His Highness's life comes to an end, mine shall too!"

"Don't say something so scary!" I held my hand to my forehead.

I had a beauty on each side, but my days weren't peaceful.

The designer tapped on her wrinkly forehead and with a smile said, "So then, Your Majesty, if you feel that Her Majesty the princess' dress is alright, I shall take my leave."

I nodded and replied, "Thank you very much. I am very happy with her dress. Thank you."

The designer bowed deeply, sighed and then said, "You need not thank me, Your Majesty. Her Majesty the Empress' body is more suited than Her Majesty the Princess'. When I took Her Majesty the princess' measurements, Her Majesty the Empress looked on with envy. It seems that Her Majesty the Empress really wants to wear a wedding dress again..."

"Actually, I would say that Her Majesty is thinking of her own family. Your Majesty, we have never seen your father. Perhaps he passed away in battle? Marriage is a very important matter for women. I have lived for a very long time and designed countless outfits for Her Majesty the Empress. I want to design a wedding dress for Her Majesty the Empress."

"All of her current clothes are my works, so my dream as a designer can be said to be achieved."

I silently nodded.

Elizabeth is like that. It looks like the majestic and imposing empress desires a family more than anyone, in reality. She's a gentle woman, a kind mom, and definitely a virtuous... okay, not virtuous... wife. Elizabeth's emotions must be like a roller-coaster ride, seeing Nier get ready to be married so cheerfully.

I looked at the designer and quietly asked, "Why don't you?"

"Your Majesty?!"

"This is my personal request." I chuckled softly and then elaborated, "Please design a wedding dress for the empress, Her Majesty. Place it in her room on my wedding day. Although I am not her husband, I am her son, so... I do look like her husband, right...?"

Ch. 48

The three of them stood before the fully-armed elf soldiers. The Valkyrie had her long-sword drawn and was ready for battle. She asked Luna who was behind her: "Miss Luna, are you afraid?"

"No."

Luna shook her head and then watched the elven soldiers in front of her vigilantly. She quietly said to the human Valkyrie: "I came here on his majesty's orders, so I cannot be scared. My only concern is that his majesty will be without a personal servant if I die."

"Yeah.....?"

The Valkyrie smirked and then continued watching the elves. If an elf were to fire an arrow at them, the Valkyrie would start a slaughter. It would take three especially skilled imperial guards to subdue one Valkyrie. The seven elves present were no match for the Valkyrie in their current situation.

Luna looked at the elves and shouted in the elven language: "Fellow elves. Please do not be tense. We are not here to hurt you. We are only here on orders to deliver an oral message."

The elves exchanged glances and then the leader angrily exclaimed: "What do

the damned Galadriels want this time? You people drove us out and cut us off from the holy spring. What do you want to talk about? You want us to submit? We refuse that sort of peace. If that's what you want to say, then let's fight! We won't acknowledge you Galadriels unless we die!"

Luna looked at his face and earnestly replied: "No. I am not a messenger for the Galadriels. I am the human prince's messenger. I did not come to ask you to submit. I just came to discuss a deal with you."

"Human?!"

The elf than paused for a moment. He then revealed an even more irritated expression and exclaimed, "Humans aren't our friends either!"

"But not your enemy either."

Luna took in a deep breath and went on, "His majesty is not trying to exterminate you nor does he consider you his enemy. Though humanity is related to the Galadriel tribe, his majesty will not consider you his enemy because of that. He wants your help and will therefore provide you with what you need. I am his majesty's only personal servant. His majesty treats elves and humans with equality. I have only brought two guards with me this time. We have no intention of threatening you."

He looked at the earnest look in Luna's eyes and determination to not back down. She had the Valkyrie stand behind her while she stood there in front with seven arrows aimed at her without any sign of fear.

A moment afterwards, the team-leader lowered his bow and arrow. However, he continued to aggressively threaten Luna.

..... Alright. Let's hear what your prince who let an elf be his personal maid has to say. But I'm warning you, unknown-elf, if you offend us, we will take your head immediately and send it to your prince."

Luna had the Valkyrie sheath her sword. She then looked at him and nodded. Luna revealed a composed smile and said: "Please take me to see your tribe leader then."

=====

I didn't tell Elizabeth about how I secretly had a wedding dress made for her. Consider it something I took upon myself. I don't know why I had the thought myself, but I felt sorry for Elizabeth. Vyvyan was happy just to have me, but Elizabeth has only known me for a few months.

I care for this silly mom of mine.

I'm not Inard, but I can still give her a moment of bliss nevertheless, right? I believe that mom will think of Inard when she sees me so blissful on my wedding day. That would make mom really sad, so if I hugged her, she would be able to feel a little relieved.

"Did you want onii-sama's robe?"

Vyvyan lingered. She never expected to hear this request from me. She bit down on her lips, thought about it and answered, "Mommy isn't too sure either. However, male elves only have a few robes. Mommy will try to recall it and make a similar one..... But why do you want one like onii-sama's?"

I looked at Vyvyan and guiltily explained: "I'm dad's son after all. Dad can't make it now, but I still want to let him see me happy....."

Vyvyan can read minds so it's really hard to lie to her face. If Vyvyan even suspects me a little, my plan will go down the drain. Vyvyan will then lose it because she'll think I like Elizabeth more. I might even get locked up that night.....

Vyvyan frowned slightly and then revealed a happy smile. She then pulled me into her embrace tightly and tenderly stroked my head. She softly said: "Mommy is so moved, son. So, so moved. Mommy is very happy that you can still remember your father. If onii-sama knew, he would be very glad. You truly are mommy's dearest son. Son....."

Vyvyan seemed to be so moved her voice got hoarse. I honestly didn't dare to tell her it was for Elizabeth..... Vyvyan patted me firmly on my back and then said: "Alright. No problem, son. Mommy will definitely help you make a robe like your father's. Mommy doesn't need the one in the past nor does mommy need to gather mana. Mommy shall use mommy's mana to forge a blessing."

As a demigod, Vyvyan could definitely forge a blessing. My preparations are

pretty much done then. After saying goodbye to Vyvyan, I left her room and saw Freya who was standing to one side writing something in a small book. Freya has been very busy lately. Well, Castell was busy too because the two of them were responsible for everything.

“Onii-sama, I need you to think about it again carefully. You must consider it again..... Consider it as me pleading you, onii-sama, please.”

Freya was ready to cry. She exclaimed: “All of the reports in your palace come to me because you don’t have a personal servant. I have to organise things in your palace daily. They even ask me about cleaning your room. Please, please get a temporary personal servant during such a busy period. I told you already that one personal servant is definitely not going to be enough!”

I scrubbed Freya’s head, smiled and said: “I’m sorry, Freya. It’s been hard on you. I will make arrangements for Lucia and Nier to be responsible for my room. As for the matters in the palace, they can just ask me directly from now and don’t need to ask you. That should give you some breathing space, right? Delay things by a few days if you’re too tired. There’s no rush.”

“Onii-sama, why do you refuse to have more personal servants or assistants?”

“Because I made a promise to Luna.” I smiled and looked toward the north. I looked in the direction Luna left and softly continued, “I promised her that I wouldn’t have another personal servant. She will forever be the only personal servant I have by my side, just like my promise to Lucia and Nier..... I respect Luna and I also really like her. I won’t do it since she doesn’t like it.”

I lowered my head to look at Freya, smiled and said: “Of course, the same applies for you. Freya, you will be my only sister.”

“You sure do understand women as usual, onii-sama. You truly are a scary man, huh?” Freya chuckled softly. She then whipped her hair and said, “What can I say if you’ve said that? I shall put up with it for your wedding, onii-sama.”

"Your majesty, the guests and other matters have been settled. This is the schedule for the wedding this time. The menu catered at the banquet afterwards requires your inspection."

Castell handed Elizabeth two sheets of paper. Elizabeth put one leg over the other, placed one hand on her temple like she was massaging it and read the document with that posture. She then chuckled and said: "I never thought that there'd come a day where you would allow someone to handle your jobs for you, Castell."

Castell froze. He then bowed and asked: "What do you mean, your majesty?"

"Ah, I'm not finding fault with you or complimenting you. I was just making a remark." Elizabeth spread the documents out, pointed at the different writings and explained, "Freya was the one who wrote the budget for the menu and delegated the workers' roles, wasn't she? Not bad. They're properly and logically organised. That girl certainly is talented. She's young yet she's able to handle his majesty's work and deal with the people around him. She must be the next you after my son becomes the emperor..... You're the only high-ranking vassal that I can trust and rely on."

Elizabeth smirked and revealed a somewhat pleased smile. She switched her legs over then looked at Castell with interest and said: "But my Castell would never let anyone else take over his work. This time however, you let someone else take over jobs for you which I find interesting. Castell, tell me what you were thinking."

Castell looked up. Elizabeth placed her elbow on the table and rested her face in her palm. There was a trace of a smile and wickedness in her eyes she looked at him with. His heart thumped gently. He shook his head and replied: "Nothing in particular, your majesty. It was just that... it is his majesty's wedding after all, therefore I felt that his majesty's people should have a hand in it..... It definitely was not because I was tired. Your majesty, I will never feel tired!"

Elizabeth chuckled softly and then stood up. She walked over to Castell, reached her hand out and pressed her hand down on Castell's head. Castell spaced out as he looked at her majesty who stood in front of him. It was then that he realised for the first time that he was looking right into her majesty's

eyes, her majesty's black eyes that were like splashed ink.

Shocked, he wanted to kneel down, but Elizabeth grabbed his arm to stop him. She stroked his head and tilted her head a little. She used her hand to measure Castell's height and noticed that Castell was now almost taller than herself. She smiled as she said: "I'm surprised you're so tall already, Castell. I've only just realised now for the first time. You're always bowing or kneeling before me. You haven't looked into my eyes for a long time, haven't you? Hehe, interesting. The young boy I held back then has become an excellent man already."

"Your majesty....."

Castell's body shook a few times and his cheeks went a little red. He breathed in the empress's unique fragrance. The fragrance she had on her hadn't changed for countless years. That was the scent that once calmed him down. The fragrance he'd search for like crazy when he awoke from a nightmare pierced through space and the years, and hit him once again.

Her majesty virtually gave him no attention after his majesty returned. Despite understanding the reasons, he still couldn't help but feel jealous.

"How truly interesting. My son virtually grew up in a flash as well. He's just a kid in my heart, yet he's going to be married in a few days' time..... You're the same, Castell. In my heart, you're that stubborn kid who would rather work himself into the ground rather than handing off your work to somebody else. I never realised you'd grown so much as well. Am I still not popular? You're my personal vassal and yet I didn't notice your change."

Elizabeth sat back in her chair. She looked at Castell, chuckled softly and went on, "Castell, you're slightly older than my son, aren't you?"

"Yes. I am older than his majesty by five years."

"I see."

Elizabeth nodded then looked at him and continued, "You should get married too then. My son is getting married and you're older than him yet you have no family. Is it because I give you too much work and you don't have time? That's my fault. Castell, you should have a family as well."

Castell went down on one knee. He looked at her majesty with absolute seriousness and hastily said: "Your majesty, I am still young. Having a family will distract me. I still wish to serve you!"

Serving her majesty was everything to Castell. If she were to tell him to leave, it would be no different to telling him "kill yourself". If he was forced to leave, his purpose in life would be erased.

Realising that, Elizabeth waved her hand and responded: "Ah, no."

She then bent over to stroke Castell's cheek and explained, "I wasn't getting rid of you. I just hope that you could have a family too. You can't spend your entire life alone because of me now, right? You need a place you can rest at to return to as well. How about this: I'll put in a word for you for whichever court lady you like or whichever daughter of whichever noble family you have eyes for."

Castell looked at Elizabeth's gaze. Her gaze was neither ridiculing nor disgusted. To the contrary, they were full of concern and care for him like she was looking at her child. Actually, it was the gaze she would look at her son with. Castell was slightly happy but bitterer than happy.

He tried so hard to be acknowledged by the empress. However, the acknowledgement he was after wasn't the empress's doting and love. Everybody considered him the empress's favoured vassal and even her male pet. But he knew that he was only going to be her son's substitute forever. All he got as a reward for his countless efforts were head-strokes. She had never loved him as a man before.

He loved her majesty more than anything in the world though. He didn't want to get married to another woman and have a family with her because the one he loved was the empress who was the only one who could give him warmth when he was writhing in pain and had no home to return to. Despite knowing that his love would never come to fruition, that didn't affect his love.

The empress loving someone else and him loving her were two separate things.

Castell bit his lip then looked at the empress and seriously said: "Thank you very much, your majesty, but I have a woman I love already."

Elizabeth dawdled for a moment before smiling cheerfully. She stroked his head and replied: "Isn't that a good thing? That's great. Tell me if you have a girl you like. Castell, you're a talented young man and my favourite vassal. No woman would reject you if you confessed. Or was it because you needed me to put in a word for you? That's fine with me. Tell me, who is she?"

No woman would reject me?

There is.....

Or does her majesty not realise that I love her?

Castell looked up at the empress and enunciated his answer word by word, emphasising every word: "Your majesty, I love you."

Elizabeth froze up for a moment before twitching the corner of her mouth. Castell prepared himself to be scolded but then the empress laughed with joy. She rubbed his head and with a smile said: "Nice, nice, Castell. You're getting smoother and smoother with your words now. But you don't need to love me. Having my son's love is enough for me. You don't need to see me as your mother. I have no way of receiving your love for your mother either. What you need to do is love a woman. I have my son already, so I don't need another son."

The empress breaks people's hearts sometimes.

Castell would be happy if she was furious.

Even if he professed his feelings.....

She would only interpret it as a son expressing his love for his mother in a coquettish manner.

And he wasn't her child.....

Castell lowered his head and clenched his teeth. He held back his tears with all his might. He then faced his empress and in a soft and polite tone a vassal speaks with to sincerely respond: "..... Understood."

"Very good, very good, your majesty. That is the schedule for tomorrow. You have worked hard."

And with that from the person in charge of the wedding-rehearsals, it finally came to an end. To be fair, the guy in charge worked really hard too. He put in a lot of effort to satisfy both the human and elf races requests for the wedding. The plan was for me to enter the church first and then make my oath to be with Nier forever. Then I had to head to the plains outside the city and make my oath with Lucia in the sea of flowers. Then we would finally begin the party for the wedding at the sea of flowers.

Normally speaking, there wouldn't be a sea of flowers in winter. The flowers were all transported here from the south and just set up. Vyvyan set up a boundary area like a greenhouse to ensure that the flowers would last until tomorrow. But I guess they'll wither after tomorrow. But then again, who can say for sure that they won't regrow and become a sea of flowers here?

Nier and Lucia looked like they let out a sigh of relief. It looks like they're pretty tired from today's rehearsals. I was so tired I was out of it. I had to ride from the church to the flower field and then I had to dance with Lucia in the sea of flowers. Then I had to kiss her lips. The kiss felt lovely the first and second time, but we were fed up by the fifth and sixth time.

I could taste their scents in my mouth. Nier was worse. She virtually got kinky every time we kissed. She kept trying to hug me and rub herself against me. We can't allow kinky-Nier out on the wedding day or we'll be done for. I don't have the time or a place to relieve her.

Freya looked at me while clapping with a smile as she said: "My, my, my, what a splendid wedding. Onii-sama, it looks like having two wives is not all that easy, huh? But you can consider it physical exercise, right?"

"Physical exercise? What part of it is? It's clearly torture." I massaged my bum that sat atop my horse as I rode it over and over. I hissed a couple of times from the pain. Vyvyan handed me a cup of tea with a smile and then said: "It's rough, isn't it, son? But this is a wonderful wedding. It's quite nice to reproduce an elven wedding in this snowy place."

"I agree. Seeing you, I remembered my wedding as well..... But that didn't

count as a wedding ceremony I don't think. I just danced in the flower-field with your father. We didn't know how to dance at the time, so it'd be better to say that we were just bouncing around randomly."

Elizabeth revealed a shy and yet nostalgic smile. She said: "If that's the case, it would mean that I never had a wedding ceremony. That makes me sad. But I don't have any regrets being able to see you so happy, son."

"What's an old hag talking about weddings for? You have plenty of young guys around you, don't you? You could have a wedding whenever you want to, can't you?" Vyvyan rolled her eyes at her. She then wrapped her arms around mine, smiled blissfully and said, "Son, you truly are becoming more and more like onii-sama. Mommy is feeling jealous seeing you get married. Ah, should mommy have a duel with Lucia some time?"

Elizabeth shoved Vyvyan away from me and then violently suggested: "Although there are many things I disagree with you on, I do agree on that. However, if you want to duel someone, pick on someone who can offer competition. I feel like my son is becoming more and more like my husband too. If you feel that way, let's have a duel."

Vyvyan glared at her. She then chuckled indifferently and responded: "Fufu, you truly are a woman with nothing but brawn for brains. My son is holding his wedding tomorrow and you want to duel me now? Aren't you worried about tainting my son's happiness with your blood?"

"Who are you kidding? Aren't you annoyed just like I am right now? That's perfect. Let's let off some steam. I was just in the mood to pound someone, and it'd be perfect if it was an elf."

"My two dear moms... could you two be a little considerate of me.....?"

I looked at the two of them hopelessly. It's my wedding tomorrow and the two of them were still bickering. I don't know what the two of them got grumpy over after watching my rehearsal. Are they not happy for me as my moms when I'm getting married? The reason for your jealousy is because "you're becoming more and more like your father"!?

The two of them looked at me and sternly exclaimed at the same time: "You only have one mom!"

I raised my hands up in surrender to indicate I understood. The two of them then realised what the other said. Just as they were about to continue bickering, Lucia and Nier walked up to me with exhausted expressions. Lucia let out a long sigh and then weakly leaned onto my chest. She weakly complained: "I'm so tired. Your highness, why is it so tiring when it's just a rehearsal.....?"

Nier grumpily shoved her and then leaned her head on my chest. She too let out a long sigh and complained: "Yeah..... It's more tiring than my daily training. My lips have gone numb from kissing....."

I looked at the two of them hopelessly. I smiled awkwardly and said: "It can't be helped. It's all for the sake of making sure we don't embarrass ourselves tomorrow in front of outsiders. But it's over now so head back and rest well. Tomorrow is the official day. Don't look tired tomorrow."

Nier whipped her head up to look at me and firmly said: "Of course I won't! I've been looking forward to this for a long time!! I can pull myself together to kiss you tomorrow even if I don't sleep tonight!"

You just said you're not sleeping tonight, didn't you?! You just said you're not sleeping tonight, didn't you?! You can, but I can't! If you don't let me sleep properly, I'll be in trouble tomorrow! I'm not as fit as you two! I'm already exhausted from today, and you still want to empty me tonight?

Lucia rubbed her lower abdomen and then in a slightly sad tone said: "Your highness, my stomach still isn't growing....."

I chuckled helplessly and comforted Lucia: "Lucia, it's only been over a week. How could it have grown.....?"

Nier rubbed her flat lower-abdomen grumpily without saying a word. I had no way of comforting Nier there.....

Tonight's dinner was very simple because Nier was really tired. I didn't have any desire to continue with work either. They didn't submit a single report today because they had good judgement. Hence, I let them turn in early today.

Nier went to work as she did every night. She gripped my chest tightly and panted heavily like she wanted to jump up and shake her hips wildly. Her eyes were filled with ecstasy. She drooled whenever she wasn't paying attention,

and I could see her saliva in the air.

I felt Nier's warmth and wildness. This is something we have to do every night. Nier's body is very addicting, but will also break you.....

Bang!!

Just as we were about to unite our body's, the door to our room got smashed open. A person's silhouette flew through the air, shoved Nier who was on top of me aside and then pulled me into their arms. I was so frightened my entire body jerked itself. Heck, I nearly screamed.

"My son... my son... my son.... you're here. You're here..... You're alright. You're alright. I'm so glad....."

"Mom?!"

"Your highness?!"

I cried out with shock while Nier roared furiously. Vyvyan hugged me tightly while completely ignoring Nier. She stroked my head and quivered as she said: "Just now, mommy felt you send a rescue signal through your necklace so mommy thought something happened to you..... But it turns out you're alright..... You're alright..... I'm so glad. I'm so glad....."

"What?!"

I'm alright because I'm here, but my necklace isn't here with me!

Ch. 51

The prince's guard-unit gathered urgently and was thus emerged for the first time. It was the first time they gathered for real after receiving orders from his majesty after countless rehearsals. All of them looked tense and excited as they dragged their rifles over and lined up in front of the stables to await his majesty's arrival. His majesty didn't have them wait for long. He practically arrived immediately after the entire unit gathered. His majesty wore an extremely serious expression, aggressive like when they first met and he wanted to destroy the church. They felt very excited. It looked like it was going

to be a very exciting job.

I looked at the guards before me that had finished preparing and suddenly felt a sense of familiarity. I used to always stand in that group as a member. I also happened to be the one that looked like he had the least potential and prospects. I was terrified of the insane schedules and wake-up calls in the middle of the night. And yet I was now the one giving out orders.

The team-leader stepped forth, looked at me and sternly said: "Your majesty! Everyone is present. Your orders, please!"

This group was trained according to the infantry drill-book. Uhm, they definitely give off the vibe of a unit. It looks like they earnestly trained according to it despite not understanding it. Vyvyan dawdled around behind me. She scanned him while standing behind me and spoke out before I could: "Son, why is there a female in your guard-unit?"

Philes lingered as he looked at Vyvyan and meekly responded: "Female?! Ah..... Your highness..... I am a male....."

Vyvyan's blue eyes were filled with distrust. She looked at Philes and sternly said: "I don't believe you. I don't believe a male could look so cute. Let me have a touch."

"Your highness?!"

Philes jerked his body due to fright and wrapped his arm around himself. Young man, if you didn't react like that, you might've been able to clear your name, but your gesture is like a female in every aspect. Actually, it screams "shy girl over here". His face looked a little red under the light from the fires. His eye lashes twitched gently. His eyes brimmed with fear and shyness. And because he was curling up his body, he looked so cute. I almost had a biological reaction watching him.

"Let me have a touch. I think that you're a female. Are you another mistress my son placed by his side?!"

"Mom. Am I that sort of person to you? It's not such a good idea to be touching a guy right now either, is it? He really is a guy. I'm serious."

I honestly couldn't imagine how mom was going to feel him up. I sincerely

sympathised for the young man too. I honestly can't do anything if mom truly wanted to feel him up. I have something more important to attend to right now as well so I have no time to fool around with you. Hurry up and touch him, and be done with it so we can get going now.

"Your highness, I really am a man! If you do not believe me then have a feel!"

When Philes saw our stern gaze, he stopped struggling and removed his arms, closed his eyes hopelessly and raised his head up. I saw the young man's body quiver. Vyvyan extended her hand toward the young man with suspicion..... I watched mom's hand nervously. I felt sad inside. I didn't think it was a good idea for mom to touch him, but it was best for me not to touch her.....

"Uhm, he has an Adam's apple. He's a guy."

Vyvyan touched his neck and then pulled her hand back once she was satisfied.

What? Whaaaat?! What you wanted to touch was his Adam's apple?! Is it just me that's sick-minded or did I not think of it at all?! You touched his Adam's apple?! I'm speechless because your judgement was right! My god, I thought something more drastic would happen, but that's it?!

It appears that I was sick-minded. I need to clean up my thoughts..... I see now that you can see if someone's a male by touching their Adam's apple.

Philes sighed a breath of relief. He then touched his neck and said: "I did say..... I am a guy....."

"Alright, alright, let's leave it at that. Let me brief you in on your next mission. My personal servant has met with danger and should be fleeing in this direction right now with pursuers on her tail. Our mission is to save my personal servant. My personal servant is very important, as important as the princess so you need to get yourselves together. We will be marching quickly. Bring your weapons and then off the pursuers once you we've rescued my personal servant, understood?"

"Roger!"

"Mount your horses!"

I led a horse by the side over. Vyvyan stepped back, looked at me and suggested with concern: "Son, your body..... You can't stay on the elven side for too long with your body. You will get weaker and weaker. The armour mommy gave you will only last for a few hours. Let mommy teleport you."

"No, mom. You can't do that in front of these people." I resolutely rejected mom and explained, "You are their enemy. If you go there and kill them, the generous, tolerant and benevolent image people have of you will crumble so leave it to me."

Vyvyan looked at me and anxiously exclaimed: "Mommy doesn't care about reputation! Mommy is really worried about you!"

"You don't need to worry about me, mom." I looked at mom with a smile, kicked my battle-steed and finished off, "I'm not alone this time. Mom, look at my soldiers behind me. They are my soldiers. They are my guards I am most proud of. Even if there is an army of tens of thousands, I'll have the courage to charge at them with them following me. Mom, wait for me! I will come back in time for sure. My personal servant has met with danger this time. I won't abandon her!"

Nier stood next to Vyvyan and anxiously shouted: "Your majesty! I want to come with you!"

Vyvyan tugged on her belt. If she didn't, Nier would've already mounted her steed. Nier was wearing just an overcoat and her cape. She wasn't wearing anything beneath that. That would be like going to battle naked!

I shook my head and told her: "Nier, stay here. We're getting married after the sun comes up. I might run a little late, but you can't be late. Please wait a while for me. I'll definitely come back to marry you!"

Nier looked into my eyes. She hesitated for a moment before nodding and making a declaration with sobs: "Uhm! Your majesty, you must come back. I will always wait for you! I promise!"

"I'm just going to put a group who don't even number as many as my guard-unit in place. Don't act like I'm not coming back." I smiled and lowered myself down to stroke Nier's head. I then rode to the front of the unit. I kicked my horse and it neighed. The horse hooves of the unit sounded intricate and yet

like a fiery war drumbeat. We crossed the stone paths of the city and the guards hastily opened the gates. The cold night wind and moonlight hit my face. My cape whistled in the wind behind me. There was only the particularly bright moonlight around our empty surroundings. It was freezing like running water.

I travelled in the moonlight under the night sky once again to go to Luna's rescue.

This time however, I didn't feel uneasy or tense. To the contrary, my heart was filled with the sounds of horse hooves and guns clanging. I was alone last time with just my horse's hooves. I had to put my life and future on the line as I rushed to Luna's rescue alone.

But I wasn't alone this time.

I wasn't bringing just my courage this time. I was bringing an army of guns and ammunition. I don't think I got any braver. It was my guards behind me that gave me unlimited confidence. As long as I have them, I'll have the confidence to cut down anything in my path!

Ch. 52

Luna didn't go far. These small tribes are usually at the border. Vyvyan can't reach them that way. They were next to humanity so it only took Luna an afternoon to get there. Luna was now fleeing in this direction. We were marching rapidly so Luna should be in sight within three hours.

If Luna is in danger, this pendant in my hand will flash red. It's essentially Luna's heart rate monitor basically. Mom tied this pendant with that necklace. As long as Luna is still carrying that necklace I'll receive signals that she's still alive.

The red light was flashing rapidly right now like an emergency light. That meant that Luna's heart rate was just as fast. She must be running with all she has. I don't know why she's running but what I know for sure is that there are pursuers behind her.

Did their negotiations break down or did Luna do something wrong?

I don't know the reason nor do I want to know right now. I just want Luna to be safe and sound. Whether they die or live afterwards is none of my concern. I can do without them if I had to choose between them and Luna. Worst case scenario, I just won't run this business. I'll come up with something else. There are countless ways for a city to make income, but I only have one Luna.

I will not let Luna get hurt because of my order. I must rescue Luna.

All of us shook when we entered the warm elven environment since we couldn't adapt to the warm and moist forest when we just came from a place with cold winds. The horses stepped over withered grass and dew formed on the horse hooves. The light from the sky informed me that it was soon going to be daylight.

"Be prepared for battle once we get over this hill up ahead!"

I turned around and shouted an order to the troops behind me. I don't think anyone would've heard me if I didn't shout over the sounds of the horse hooves. The soldiers shouted back to respond upon hearing my order. They all reached behind their backs and grabbed hold of their gun-handles.

This is the first time my guard-unit is killing I think. They only shot targets for practice but I wanted them to see blood this time since they would definitely see blood in the future. This can be considered their first mission as my new unit I guess. To be honest, I felt like I was training a squad more than I was worried about Luna.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying I wasn't worried about Luna. It's just that when I looked at the soldiers behind me, I felt like Luna was already safe.

Wait for me, Luna. I will definitely rescue you!

"Don't stop everyone! Don't stop! Don't stop! Keep running! His majesty's troops are definitely on their way here to protect us! Keep running!"

Luna screamed loudly. The elves with their kids by their side and the elves with a pitiable number of belongings ran southward with all they had. Behind them in the forest were more elves who were shouting angrily. A rain of arrows was fired at the fleeing group of elves under the moonlight. The Valkyrie with

Luna angrily looked at that group of elves and shouted: "Miss Luna, I'll charge over there and kill them now!"

"Don't!" Luna extended her hand out to stop her and seriously said, "Don't..... They did not do anything wrong. Do not kill them! Do not kill them! We should just run! And you are her majesty's Valkyrie so I do not want for something to happen to you!"

The Valkyrie looked at her and seriously responded: "I came here on orders so naturally, I should protect you, Miss Luna. As long as I can protect you, I have completed the mission her majesty entrusted me with. I just want to complete my mission. My life is meaningless."

"As long as you protect me? Are you not protecting me by staying by my side?"

"Isn't killing all of our pursuers behind us protecting you as well?"

Luna looked at the Valkyrie and couldn't help but smile. She then said: "Don't be like that. We just need to escape. Once we get over the hill, we will be able to see....."

"Cavalry!!"

The Valkyrie belted toward the rear. Luna's entire body shuddered and then she quickly spun her head around to see dozens of cavalrymen charge toward them in the forest. Their sabres moved under the clear moonlight like a death-god's blade. The light emitted from their blades and Luna's immeasurable fear was reflected in her eyes.

The sound of their horse hooves running was like an earthquake. The elves that fled out here with Luna all had fear in their airs. One of the females cried out loudly and knelt on the ground while hugging her child tightly. Luna shook her head and patted herself on her face. She then pulled the female up and shouted loudly: "Run! Run faster! Run faster! Humanity's lands will be in sight once we get over this hill! Hurry! Don't stop!"

The sound of the horse hooves literally tore the ground apart. You could see the rage on the riders' faces. Luna's body trembled due to the floor quaking from the horse's stomping on the ground as well as the fear in her heart. This

was an open area so there was nowhere to run to when the cavalry gave chase. If they get over the hill, they could enter the forest. Once they enter the forest, the cavalry will be forced to slow down leaving them with a chance to escape.

"Miss Luna, please keep running."

The Valkyrie stopped in her tracks, turned around to face the cavalry unit and shouted: "If you manage to get through this then my death will not be in vain. Hurry and go, Miss Luna. I will do my best to stall the cavalry behind you!"

"You....."

"Go!"

The leader of the cavalrymen roared as he charged toward the Valkyrie. The Valkyrie faced him fearlessly. She drew her long sword as she faced the cavalry who held his sabre out to his side and thrust it toward him. The cavalry unit had the Valkyrie completely surrounded in an instant. The smell of blood spurted into the air in an instant and a number of elves cried out in pain as they fell off their horses. However, the remaining cavalrymen sped up and chased after Luna who had resumed running.

The quaking created by the horses sprinting at her virtually threw Luna's body into the air. She didn't look back while the cavalrymen charged toward her and raised his sabre.

The cavalryman didn't need to swing his sabre to kill his enemy. He just needed to hold it there and charge his target, and the sabre would lop her head off as he zipped pass.

Luna ran toward the top of the hill with all of her might. She looked at the lights of the town next door which came closer and closer with every step. She looked toward that world.

That was the world she belonged to! Behind her was a sabre, a cavalryman out to kill. There was blood dripping from his sabre. However, her eyes were firm and they missed the land in front of her like a tourist returning home, yet as though she saw was watching her lover she missed most.

"Fire!"

Luna froze in place. A cavalry unit from the other side rushed over. The deafening eruption and the fire that virtually looked like it set the sky ablaze was like a dragon's roar. The elven cavalrymen behind her cried out in pain and fell off their mounts one after another. Smoke and blood littered the air within an instant. Luna looked at the cavalry charging toward her pursuers blankly. The lights which flashed non-stop killed the cavalrymen one by one. The few lucky ones that didn't get hit by bullets were slashed to death on the ground while they were in disarray.

I tugged on my horse reins and breathed in the stench of blood that could almost make one puke. I turned around to take a look at Luna who was completely astonished and smiled. I then turned back around and shouted at the elves on the ground who were trembling and didn't dare to move: "I am the prince of humanity, Troy Rosvenor. You threatened my personal servant's life. Lay down your weapons now. If you still hold hostile intent toward us, you'll be shown no mercy!"

Ch. 53

I dismounted. I flipped over the corpse of the Valkyrie who died in battle. Her eyes were still open. She was covered in slash wounds and her corpse got stomped all over by the horses to the point where she was basically soaked in her own blood on the ground. I reached my hand out and gently closed her eyes. All the Valkyries are like this. They don't surrender even if it means death. I admire and respect them for that. Regardless of what the reason is, no ordinary person could be so loyal.

I stood up. My guards had unarmed the armed elves in the rear and gathered them together. The elves looked at the guns in their hands with fear. Seeing a cavalry unit spitting fire as they slaughtered their way to reach you is like seeing a fire dragon attack you. Even elves instinctively get frightened by this sort of weapon.

"Did you people kill her?"

I asked them in the elven language and the leader stood up. He looked at me and angrily answered: "You're humanity's prince? Your....."

I looked at him and emphasised each word: "I asked if you were the ones that killed her."

"..... Yes. But your people snatched our people away! We refused your request very affirmatively. We didn't use force previously. We refused your request after we discussed it with you. However, your people spread fallacies to mislead our people and secretly got our people to flee to your side today. How can I watch my people run away mindlessly?! That's your fault! You're the ones who instigated our people to run away!"

After I listened to everything he had to say, I turned around to ask Luna: "Is what he said true?"

"They don't want much! They just want to provide a home for their children where they aren't always on the run and hold a respectable job. They want to feed their family, themselves and to have warmth!" Luna looked at the elf with anger and exclaimed, "But you can't provide them with those things. I can't watch them starve to death here with you! If you can't feed your people, don't keep them! They have the right to choose a place where they can be fed, live and work!"

I turned to look at the elves. The elves standing on the hill quivered. All of them wore shabby clothing that virtually couldn't cover their body. Their thin physiques quivered in the wind. There were some who were lying on the ground panting for dear life just running to this point.

It looks like they truly were on the brink of death from starvation. The group that were willing to come over had understandable reasons to choose so. However, it was just that their leader wasn't willing to let them go. That means that Luna was in the wrong, since she shouldn't have led their people away when their leader didn't agree.

"I am very sorry. My personal servant has caused you trouble." I made a small bow and he froze up. I presume he didn't think I would bow just like that. Luna froze up as well. She looked at me blankly as if it was the first time she met me. I looked at the elf who was either the chief or village chief and in a serious tone

said, "We certainly should not have accepted your people without your permission. Your people should have left only after you gave your permission instead of fleeing. The fault there lies with my personal servant for being rash."

He nodded and spoke as if he was relieved: "Exactly! That's how it's supposed to be! Prince, you're a reasonable man, huh!"

"But that doesn't mean you have the right to kill my people."

I then immediately aimed my gun on his forehead. I looked at him sternly. My gaze didn't change. Well, my gaze was the same as when I apologised before.

"You could've waited until they arrived in my territory and then came and discussed it with me, and I would've returned them to you. Further, you didn't have to kill if you chased after them. But you did. You killed my guard. You killed my Valkyrie. Do you now comprehend what you did wrong?"

"I....."

"Good."

I pulled the trigger and after a flash and loud bang, blood burst into the air. The firework of death destroyed bone and flesh, spraying blood in all directions. The elf in front of me dropped to the ground with a loud thud. The elves behind him let out cries of despair. I looked at them with my head tilted and asked: "You have something to say? I've already apologised for my personal servant instigating your people and I will compensate you for that by returning these elves to you. But you killed my guard. So naturally, I need to make someone compensate with their life. Is this somehow strange and confusing to you?"

Not one of them spoke. I nodded and then said, "You don't have a leader now then, right? I'll look after these people for the meantime. When you have a new chief or village chief, come and discuss this matter with me. Alright, you can all head back now."

The elves fearfully looked at the rifles the guards held. The guards drew their long-swords like they were chasing animals back into the forest. I put my handgun away and looked at the scared elves. I took in a deep breath, faced the sun and seriously said: "You don't have to be tense. I will naturally protect you since you have chosen to come to my side to work. I am humanity's prince, Troy

Rosvenor. I most welcome you to come and work in my city. I will provide you with sufficient food and prepare adequately warm homes for your living needs, so you need not worry. Please come with us back to the city. Those who are weak may choose to ride a horse."

My guards by my side led their horses into the crowd, pulled up those lying on the ground or otherwise helped women up onto their horse and carefully looked after them as they headed back. Those who could walk normally walked on feet slowly in between the cavalry unit. I let out a sigh of relief as I watched the unit slowly gather up. I then looked at Luna by my side and chuckled softly.

Luna looked at me and extended her arms out. In her hoarse voice she softly requested: "Your majesty..... could I hug you for a bit? I am so scared... really... really scared....."

I checked to see that my guards had left before I hugged Luna tightly. Luna clung to my arms tightly and leaned her head on my shoulder as she sobbed. I gently patted her on her back and softly said: "Don't worry, don't be scared. Luna, I told you that I would definitely come to your rescue if you were in danger..... It held true in the past and it still holds true now. I will definitely come to your rescue."

Luna hugged me tightly. In a shaky voice she said next to my ear she said: "Uhm..... But I am still very scared..... I was really scared that I would never see you again. I am so scared..... I want to stay by your side forever, your majesty... I want to take care of you forever....."

Her body was freezing. She wished she could hug me with her arms and legs. I hugged her and stroked her head as I felt Luna's fear and quivering. I was really scared as well. I was worried Luna would be gone if I was one moment late. I don't want to lose anyone. I'll be completely happy to have just them by my side.

Luna was the same as Nier to me. She was someone I would never abandon. I won't abandon Luna. I'll definitely bring Luna home no matter how dangerous or scary it is because she's my personal servant. My only personal servant.....

Luna gently pushed me away and looked at my face. She gently reached her hands out to cup my face. She then tippy-toed up.....

"Your maj-, ah....."

Just as Philes found his majesty, he saw him and his personal servant kissing. He stood there awkwardly and confused..... It's his wedding today and yet he's out here kissing another woman. This isn't good no matter what you say, right.....? But he didn't need to concern himself with their affairs too much..... That said... that said..... He was still a little worried for his instructor..... Will Miss Nier get angry.....?

"Hurry up and get going..... What are you looking at?!"

An individual slapped him on his shoulder from the side and then forcefully twisted his head to one side. He then aggressively warned him: "Do not tell our instructor about this, you hear? We are in no position to be sticking our noses into his majesty's affairs he's having left-right-centre....."

"True....."

Philes shook his head. Our instructor and his majesty's do love each other. His majesty should be able to handle his own affairs, right.....? I'm better off staying in my lane and doing my job as a guard!

Ch. 54

Nier took in a big breath. She looked at his majesty who helped Luna dismount at the church's entrance. Anger seeped into her mind. If this was just another day, she would've gone up to Luna and given it to her. Unfortunately, they were at the wedding venue so she had to maintain a smile even if she was angry.

I helped Luna dismount. Luna looked at me nervously and softly said: "Your majesty! I... I did not know today was your wedding..... Why did you not say so sooner...? If I knew..... If I knew....."

"Does rescuing you conflict with getting married? I'm a little late but... I haven't caused any delays. I think Nier can understand. Luna, you go and rest

first. I've already asked the head-maid to help the elves settle down. Freya will handle the stuff that comes after." I scrubbed Luna's head and then shook out my cape and headed into the church. I don't have time to get changed now so I have to wear this simple-casual set of clothes I've worn countless times for my wedding.

Mm, it seems there's some blood on my boots too.

Luna looked at the silhouette of his majesty's back and dazed out. She pressed her hands to her heart gently. The man in front of her was going to get married. He walked toward the church underneath the bright sunlight with a blissful smile. His loved one was there. There were countless people there giving him their blessings. That was where he belonged.

Despite him appearing before her like a hero last night. Despite him appearing before her heroically and suavely countless times. Despite him protecting her and loving her countless times..... He wasn't her hero and she wasn't his princess. She never had his love. Though the kiss they shared under the moonlight was sweet, it was just like a dream under the moonlight. She had his scent in her mouth right now, but how much of it came from his love who was as beautiful as an angel?

Her heart ached..... Despite knowing that she wouldn't have a future with him from the start. Despite knowing that she had no hope right from the start. Despite telling herself not to fall for him, why did he have to be so gentle with her? Why did he make her as important as Miss Lucia and Miss Nier when he clearly didn't love her...? Wouldn't he give her false ideas by doing that? Wouldn't he give her dreams by doing that?

You gave me false and dim hope and despair. You're so cruel, your majesty..... You don't like me yet you treat me affectionately over and over again..... You... you... make it hurt so much..... You don't like me yet you appear like a hero in front of me over and over again when you're not my hero.....

I walked into the church. All of the guests sitting to the left and right got up and applauded. I walked toward Nier on the other side, passing through the applauses, flower petals and wine being poured. The lights behind the exquisitely designed glass in the church then shone over there, putting the

spotlight on Nier, thereby making her appear as eye-catching as a goddess.

With a flower bouquet in hand, Nier looked at me from behind her veil in her wedding dress. She looked at me like she was standing on a rainbow like a beautiful angel. Her beauty made everything in the church appear bland. It was like the entire church was colourless with her brightness.

"Now, please face each other. Your majesty, please open Miss Gillante's face-veil."

I gently opened Nier's face-veil and looked straight into her eyes. She looked back at me with a little tinge of anger in her eyes and she pursed her lips together tightly. I chuckled softly as I looked at her. As I stood in front of her, I softly said: "Don't be angry, Nier. I was only a little bit late....."

Nier softly replied: "I'm not angry because of that....."

She then leaned in toward me and I kissed her.

The kid wore a large robe that looked smooth. He looked at us with his childish voice that he tried to make sound majestic. He also trembled a little out of fear.....

"Next, please kiss under the watch of god. Please kiss the one you love most!"

Nier didn't want to raise her head. She muttered: "That's definitely Luna's scent, isn't it... your majesty?"

I chuckled and then kissed her lips without saying anything prior and Nier moaned softly. At first, she moved her tongue proudly, not giving in. But then she began to go along with me. She gently leaned her body against mine, pressed her hands on my chest and moaned softly again.

I then let go of her before she started to get kinky. I chuckled quietly as I said: "Now it's your scent."

"..... Hmph."

Nier blushed a little and then revealed a shy smile. The guests seem to be all swept off their feet by Nier's smile. I heard some people gasp very distinctively. I picked up the ring by the side, gently elevated her left hand and wore the exquisite ring onto her middle finger..... In this world, they say that the middle

finger is the finger closest to god since it's one's longest finger. As such, we had to wear our wedding ring on our middle finger..... The exquisite diamond went perfectly with Nier's hand. To be honest, the femineity of Nier's hands had been grinded away because she wielded her sword so much. However, her hand was warm in mine nonetheless.

Nier grabbed my right hand gently and wore my ring onto my middle finger. She then tippy-toed up and gave me a gentle kiss on my forehead. The guests applauded. I looked down and saw her majesty sitting in the front row wiping her eyes while watching me. She didn't seem to care about the way I was dressed.....

I wanted to give mom a surprise but it looks like I'll have to show her in private at night. I grabbed hold of Nier's hands and turned to face the guests.

"God has overseen your marriage. I hope that your happiness will forever be as passionate, that your oath will never be forgotten and that you will hold hands forever, never letting go. Your majesty and princess!"

After she wore the ring on, Nier Gillante officially changed her name to Nier Galadriel Rosvenor. A Valkyrie officially left the squad and became the princess of the royal family. Decades later, this young girl will probably become the empress of the empire. If the prince meets with misfortune and loses his life, she will be the next empress who rules, and her child will be the only one with royal blood.

The Rosvenor nation's bloodline almost went extinct once. If it wasn't for the empress who fought back with her power, there would be no Rosvenor empire here. The Rosvenor empire's only prince now had a princess, so the Rosvenor empire could finally go on.

Nier turned sideways to face me with a smile and said: "Did you know, your majesty? I was once a young girl too."

"Hmm?"

I held her hand tightly as I looked at her."

"I became a guard, a Valkyrie because I met her majesty. I am very proud and honoured by that. I was able to serve the strongest woman on this continent, to

protect her by her side, and to train this continents most fearsome force."

Nier and I intertwined our fingers. I could feel her warmth in my entire hand.

"But I met you, your majesty. Now I have reverted back into a young girl."

Nier then lowered her head and elaborated, "I am very happy right now. Truly very happy. I am truly very happy to be able to hold the hand of this continent's smartest, most gentle and kind man in this moment."

"Nier, do you know when I started to like you?"

"Your majesty....."

"From the moment you came to welcome me home....."

I will never forget the first time I came to humanity. She appeared before me when I was afraid of this unknown world.

From now on, let me hear you say this every day: "Welcome home, your majesty! I, Nier Gillante have come to welcome you home!"

"Welcome home, your majesty!"

Ah, Nier. I'm home.

Home, is right at your side.

Ch. 55

It's by all accords abnormal for the weather to be so warm in winter. Indeed it was because Vyvyan cast magic to manipulate the weather here. However, due to the lack of mana here in humanity, the weather could only be maintained for one day, though that was enough.

It was enough to have the flowers in the sea of flowers sway in the wind and enough for Lucia to stand in the flowers cheerfully.

I saw Luna laugh joyously in the sea of flowers last time and this time, I was going to see Lucia dance in it. Lucia held her dress in the sea of flowers as she

danced. Her smile was more beautiful than the flowers under the sunlight. The flowers and breeze followed her dance as though god was watching her dance as well. Her bright smile reflected the sunrays. The flowers paled in comparison to her.

Lucia wasn't smiling because of the flowers. It was her beautiful smile that caused the flowers to bloom. The sea of flowers only bloomed when she smiled.

Her white wedding dress didn't reflect the sunrays as Nier's diamonds did. Her dress that contained mana swayed and the flowers it brushed became more captivating. It was similar to an angel spreading her beauty to things of the world. The fluttering butterflies flew to her after being attracted by her. They circled around their goddess and danced with her.

"Ah, your highness."

She stopped in the middle of her dance when she saw me. She laughed softly and extended her hand out toward me. I grabbed her hand and pulled her into my arms. She panted softly and looked at me with her joyous and excited blushed face. She leaned onto my chest and softly said: "Your highness, I'm really happy right now....."

"Yeah? But our wedding hasn't ended yet. Are you already happy just like this?"

She looked up at me and clasped my face gently with her hands. She smiled and said: "I feel very blissful just being able to be by your side, your highness. To have your child..... I have only dreamed of something so blissful. We faced many obstacles but we finally succeeded in the end."

"Weren't the obstacles we faced for the sake the bliss we feel right now? If we got together smoothly without any hiccups, would we feel this blissful?"

"If there wasn't that woman then I would be even more blissful....." Lucia poked her tongue and then switched it for a happy smile before saying, "But it's fine now. I managed to win in the end even though I lost the duel. I got pregnant first. I was the first to have your child. That is enough."

I stroked her head and then gently kissed her lips. Lucia is much smaller in stature than Nier. She tippy-toed up and leaned into my arms with her two

hands pressed onto my chest to feel my heart beat. I had one arm around her slender waist and my other pressed on her back as I enjoyed her fragrance. Lucia's reaction was different to Nier's. Nier is extremely proactive while Lucia's kissing skills are still very immature.

Lucia is immature like that. She's like a fruit that hasn't ripened. But Lucia's innocence, determination and love are what intoxicate me most. Lucia loves me as do I. I initially suspected that my love for Lucia was Troy's memories he left behind in this body. But when I saw Lucia desperately try to save me, I knew I had fallen for her.

Lucia said it before. She didn't love me because I was the prince or Troy. She said that she would love another person the same way if he was the one who treated her that way. So I can reasonably assume that Lucia loves me, right? I could hug her to my heart's content. I could hug this girl that loved me.

"Let's dance now then, your highness. I'm not good at dancing, but it's good enough if we can hold hands, right?!"

We released each other's lips. Lucia wiped her lips and then pulled on my hand. We crossed the warm lands where the sun shined, passed through the flowers and the vacant space. The scent of the flowers seeped into the air as we danced. It shuttled through this moment of bliss and laziness. We confessed our most sincere love for each other in this fake sea of flowers.

The guests weren't allowed to appear during this time. They weren't permitted to interrupt until our blissful dance ended. Therefore, all of the guests had to watch their dance from one side. Vyvyan watched her child's posture and chuckled softly. She spoke to the individual next to her wiping her tears: "I rarely see my child reveal such a blissful smile. That smile was originally only used with me. I suddenly feel a little lonely."

"Yeah. After he gets married, I won't be able to frequent his place anymore. He already has his own family and is no longer my son by my side anymore. Not only is he my son, he's also a father and a husband. The thought of that truly makes me feel very lonely."

Elizabeth wiped the corner of her eyes. Her tears just wouldn't stop. They weren't just tears of joy. Her tears were a combination of happiness and

sadness. Elizabeth didn't get to see what her son looked like as a kid. She hadn't even spent much time with him. She had to watch him go off and be someone else's husband and father before she could see her son be her son by her side.

The feeling of emptiness and loneliness virtually tore her heart. Vyvyan was different. Though Vyvyan was a little sad, she felt a feeling of accomplishment having raised him. Elizabeth on the other hand couldn't. He was still that small infant who snuggled up in her arms in her mind, but her child was now getting married before she knew it. It was as though the child was completely unrelated to her. She didn't get to feel the sense of accomplishment of raising him, so all she felt was emptiness.

He's not going to be by her side for much longer.

How much longer can he stay by my side.....? I really want to speak out. I really do. I really want to keep him by my side forever. I didn't get to watch him gradually grow up, but I wanted to see his every change. I can't though. I'm his mother. A mother can't stop the monster known as time. I just want to be a qualified mother, but I didn't even see my son grow up. I owe him far, far too much. What must I do to be worthy of being called "mom"?

"Let's go. Their dance has ended."

Vyvyan pulled her and Elizabeth raised her head up in a flustered fashion. She saw Lucia and her son walk over hand-in-hand. He wore a blissful and yet tranquil smile. He came over one step at a time. Her sight was blurry due to her tears and the sunrays. His reflection was that of a man's silhouette.

Stop, stop, stop, he's my son. He's my son. He's my beloved son.

"Mom."

He walked up to her and called her. Vyvyan stood up but Elizabeth lingered for a moment before quickly standing up. I looked at my two moms, reached my hand out and held their hands. While my identity is somewhat special, I hold both of my moms in the same regard. Although Elizabeth didn't raise me for long, I could tell that her motherly love reserved for me was no less than that of Vyvyan's. She's silly and clumsy but she still did everything to give me her everything.

Motherly-love isn't something which can be displayed by how much time you spent by one's side, but if she can give her everything for her child without asking for anything in return, a future or concern for herself, viewing her child as her everything. It doesn't matter how successful she was or how noble she was because she was just an ordinary mother in front of him. She could give up anything because her child was her everything.

Both of my moms have successfully done that.

Both of them are my moms. There's no ranking.

I'm a blessed individual, aren't I? I have two shares of heavy yet blissful motherly-loves. And I really cherish them.....

Ch. 56

In short, the weddings were very successful. Both humanity and the elven imperial guards indicated that they were very pleased with it. Echte cried tears of joy as his daughter had married into the imperial family and couldn't speak coherently in front of the queen. Vyvyan told him to forego the formalities and allowed him to bring his weapons into the imperial palace since we were basically family now. For the elves, being a family member of imperial family didn't hold any extra significance because power was determined by mana. Echte was now a member of the imperial family, but he still wasn't worshipped by anybody.

It was different for humanity though, except, Nier didn't have any family so there won't be anyone who rises into the heavens from the bottom-rung. That saved the empress the trouble of considering power balances.

The merry of the wedding continued until night before ending. Everyone enjoyed it as much as they could, filling the air with the smell of wine. You didn't have to drink to get intoxicated. You could get drunk by smelling the air alone. Lucia had to leave early due to her health. That caught the attention of lots of people who tried to find out if I had an heir to which I denied.

I don't want for everyone to know about Lucia's pregnancy because if somebody is plotting something then Lucia who's pregnant will easily become a target. I intend to have her stay with Vyvyan until she gives birth for the sake of keeping her safe. Lucia soon had to return to the elven side. I don't want to part with her, but I don't feel safe keeping her by my side.

Vyvyan can protect her better. As a man, I don't want to admit that I can't protect my wife because of my pride. But the truth is, I really am not as strong as Vyvyan, so I entrusted mom with her safety. I believe that Vyvyan will do everything in her power for her grandchild's sake.

I have absolute confidence in my mom too. That is indisputable.

But now I'm slightly worried about Elizabeth since she wasn't in a very good state today. She looked like she was forcing a happy smile. She was crying but it didn't look like tears of happiness but tears of sadness. She left the party very early so I'm really worried.

"Your majesty, congratulations on your marriage to Miss Nier."

When I went back to my palace, all of the maids greeted me with a smile. I nodded to greet them back. They all received two empire gold coins today as a reward. A single gold coin is considered a huge amount for a girl from an ordinary family so they were particularly hard working when serving the guests today as well.

Nier doesn't hold her liquor well so she left first. Lucia had already turned in. I carefully pushed the door open. The fire was already out. Nier was curled up and sound asleep. It looks like I can sleep in peace today. Luna who was sitting on a chair to the side stood up and took my cape with a smile. She quietly said: "Your majesty, congratulations on your marriage with Miss Nier and Miss Lucia. It looks like I will have to call Miss Nier, princess from now on."

"Uhm. You've worked hard too, Luna. I made you go through something so dangerous"

Luna shook her head and with a smile replied: "It's alright. It was my decision to go and I decided on my actions. Thank you very much for coming to my rescue today..... You could have chosen not to come but you still did....."

"Don't say that." I cut her off and sternly continued, "Luna, you're as important as Nier and Lucia to me. I won't abandon you for them."

"In that case, right here in front of Miss Nier, I mean, our princess, please kiss me."

Luna looked up at me with a smile but serious look. I lingered for a moment before taking a step back awkwardly. I was a little scared now. Don't you think Luna's request is a little too strange...? It's basically playing with fire. Nier is drunk right now, but if she wakes up and sees me kissing Luna in front of her, I bet she'll run her sword through this cheating husband of hers heart and Luna's.

"I was joking, your majesty." Luna giggled softly and then picked up a paper bag. She said: "A man sent this over before. He said that it was clothes that you ordered. They are ready now. Are you going somewhere now?"

"Uhm. I'm going to go and see her majesty."

I took the paper bag then made a hand gesture to keep quiet and said: "If Nier wakes up, just tell her I haven't returned yet. I think I'll be back tonight... if nothing unexpected happens that is....."

"Alright, your majesty."

Luna didn't say anything else. I got changed outside. This is the robe I asked to have made based on the information Vyvyan provided. The previous set was the set my father left behind. It wouldn't be such a good idea for me to wear that one, but it looks like his tastes are similar to mine. The robe's main colour was white.

It was very similar to what I usually wore. Could it be that Elizabeth had my clothes made according to her memory?

"Inard, did you know that our child, our Troy got married today?"

Elizabeth gently touched the long-sword in her hand and muttered to herself. Her eyes were full of tears. Several bottles of strong wine lay in all directions on the ground next to her feet and the air smelt like wine.

She gently and affectionately touched her long sword, the sword her husband gifted her. The sword was the sword elf-kings wielded, which is the only other

thing Inard left with her other than their child. It was the last time he provided her with his protection. Inard can't protect her at her side so he had to have the sword stay with her in his place. That was the last gentle gesture he left for her.

"Our son has grown up..... How ironic... He's our child and yet neither of us watched him grow up. He was just a tiny infant back then. It's like he grew up in the blink of an eye. He's my child and yet I couldn't see him..... You're my husband, so why aren't you by my side?"

A few drops of tears landed on her sword and ran down it slowly. Elizabeth ignored the tears coursing down her face. She spaced out as she looked at her long-sword. She wanted to see her husband on the sword one last time.

"When I watched our child's wedding today, I noticed that he looks more and more like you. He's becoming more and more like you back then..... I almost couldn't hold myself back from hugging him..... His wedding reminded me of us. We didn't even have a wedding, did we? Inard..... Our child has returned to my side..... Please... when... will you be able to return to my side? I can give up the throne and the empire if it means that you can return to my side. Let's find some place and have a happy and peaceful home, okay? Let's just lead ordinary lives... just like back then....."

The door to her room slowly got pushed open. Without raising her head up, she groused: "Get lost. Without my orders, no one is all-....."

"Elizabeth....."

In a hazy state, Elizabeth looked up. Through her hazy vision obstructed by her tears and dizziness, that familiar long-white cape, that familiar smile and that familiar physique appeared in front of her.....

Elizabeth looked at him blankly while she murmured her loved one's name: "Inard....."

"Elizabeth....."

This wasn't a dream.....

Nor was it a hallucination from being under the influence.....

Because Inard's embrace was still as warm as it was back then. Hugging him

put her ease... just like back then.....